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**HOUSE OF SHADOWS AS TEXT AND PERFORMANCE:
STRUCTURAL AND CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS
OF/FOR THE CONTEMPORARY MUSICAL PLAY**

BY

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FCKDAV002**

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
award of the degree of Master of Arts in Theatre and Performance.

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
GRADUATE SCHOOL IN HUMANITIES

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an explication of my thesis production House of Shadows, which was presented in November 2004 towards the fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts in Theatre and Performance (Theatre Making) at the University of Cape Town. The explication focuses largely on the structural and conceptual processes in the creation of a new musical. As a theatre-maker, my research was driven by a need to (re)consider the musical as a compelling art form.

The first chapter considers the contemporary South African theatrical landscape, creating the context in which House of Shadows was created. I have also discussed aspects of the play that make it distinctively South African, despite the American roots of the musical as a popular form of theatre.

In the second chapter, House of Shadows is examined within the context of the (contemporary) musical play. The aspects of the musical play that found expression in the text and performance of House of Shadows are given individual attention. These include: the book, the score, the design and the direction. A significant focus is placed on the way these individual elements are integrated to form a unified and unique whole.

The third chapter proposes a conceptual framework for reading musicals by examining the validity of the musical as festive theatre. The four key structural elements – display, contest, celebration and ceremony – and the objective – communal renewal – of festive theatre are discussed in the context of House of Shadows. This chapter concludes with an opinion of using this framework for analysing musical texts and performances.

INTRODUCTION

Musical theatre is a major area of personal obsession, exploration and research in my work as a theatre practitioner. Having previously completed studies in musical theatre as a performer, I was keen to explore aspects of theatre-making in the genre and the Master of Arts in Theatre and Performance (Theatre Making) course at the University of Cape Town offered the opportunity to examine the process of creating a new musical from multiple perspectives: as writer-composer, designer and director.

Indeed, because the process necessitated a fluid and constant movement between my varying roles as theatre-maker, my discussion below will examine relevant issues as they come to light rather than dividing the process into a series of artificially delineated stages. Furthermore, although the issues raised in this paper relate to the wider context of musical theatre practice, this explication shall focus largely upon those aspects most relevant to the process of creating my thesis production, House of Shadows.

I chose to create House of Shadows in the tradition of the musical play, a versatile form of musical theatre, established in 1927 with the original production of Show Boat and made popular with the production of Oklahoma! (1943). The first section of this paper highlights some of the challenges encountered in translating the norms of an essentially American art form into the South African theatrical landscape in a manner that opens up creative potential for the local theatre-maker rather than insisting upon a restrictive adherence to a foreign tradition.

The second part of this explication is an investigation of the musical play, in which I examine how the structural and theatrical elements of House of Shadows – the score, libretto, design, and staging – combined to form a unified and unique theatrical act. My analysis takes into account the fact that House of Shadows is a

relatively “young” musical having been conceived, written and produced during the final semester of my Masters course, and I have highlighted areas that could be refined as well as those which were successful in performance.

The final part of this dissertation proposes a conceptual framework for creating and analysing musical theatre texts. This method of reading musical theatre texts and performances links the musical to festive theatre and is identified by White in An Annotated Dictionary of Technical, Historical, and Stylistic Terms Relating to Theatre and Drama: a Handbook of Dramaturgy (1995). White names several elements of festive theatre that he believes may be transferred to the field of musical theatre and I will explore the validity of this notion by examining whether these elements found expression in House of Shadows.

Central to my exploration of the musical play was a desire to (re)assess the musical as a compelling form of popular theatre. Musicals are dissimilar to other forms of theatre and should be examined on their own terms. Although the creation of House of Shadows allowed me to continue my ongoing exploration into the representation of homosexual men in musical theatre and my fascination with the relationship between dramatic narrative, storytelling and fantasy, my primary concern as a theatre-maker in this process was how form could illuminate the content of the play. As such, the focus of this explication is an analysis of how the structures of the musical play and festive theatre influenced the theatre-making process.

CHAPTER ONE: THE MUSICAL IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE PRACTICE

Since 1994, South African theatre has become 'more diverse but also more conflicted' (Kruger 1999: 21). This movement towards a theatre culture that represents the diversity in our country – a process that is continually in motion – has been reflected in new plays, works of physical theatre, even opera. These have included, amongst others, Nothing but the Truth (2002), Rain in a Dead Man's Footprints (2004) and Love and Green Onions (2001). In creating House of Shadows, I felt that it was important to consider musical theatre within the contemporary South African theatrical landscape. However, the output of new musical theatre productions has been eclipsed by major local productions of British and American musicals like Cats (1981 / produced locally in 2001), The Phantom of the Opera (1986 / 2004) and Chicago (1978 / 2005) as well as revivals of "classic" South African musicals like District Six (1985 / revived in 2002), Sarafina (1986 / 2004) and Kat and the Kings (1995 / 2004). Only a handful of new musicals have been realised in production, including Fie!a's Child (1999), Vere: 'n musical (2000) and Sing a Song of South End (2002), none of which has reached the kind of cult status of the imported hits or revivals¹.

While internationally derived musicals provide South African performers with much-needed employment, the economic sponsorship of these productions remains an issue. The financial risk of producing a musical is reduced when the product is a recognisable "brand" – the marketing of the imported musicals in particular relies heavily on the fact that the show is a reproduction of the original staging – and sponsors are more willing to fund a product that will (in all likelihood) return their

¹ I exclude widely successful revues like African Footprint (2000) and The Zulu (2001) from this discussion because, although they exist within the wider spectrum of music theatre, the very different relationship between drama and music as a discourse within the theatrical event separates the revue from the musical.

investment. I am not suggesting that sponsors should withhold funding for such productions, but surely some provision should be made for supporting the creation of new South African work? Sponsorship by the business sector and private individuals is one thing, but if prominent local organisations that operate on funding supplied by the government and the South African community – the local television and radio stations spring to mind – are going to spend money on musicals, surely there is a responsibility to nurture new local productions? Most disturbing of all is when the South African community is excluded completely in the creation of the theatrical event, as in the current touring production of Mamma Mia! (1999 / produced locally in 2005), sponsored by SABC2 and Kfm, where even the performers are imported from beyond our borders.

In terms of local output, South African musical theatre audiences seem to have forged a strong association between musicals and nostalgia, hence the support of the revivals mentioned above, which appeal to audiences who may remember the show in its previous incarnation as well as to those who are young enough to have missed the show last time around. As audiences, we seem to be obsessed with watching the past and it becomes easier – and profitable – to produce musical theatre productions that provide obvious opportunities for the audience to “feel good” rather than challenging their perceptions of our contemporary social and cultural situation. I am not trying to diminish the value of the productions mentioned above but I am concerned that new South African musicals have not attempted to reflect some part of our contemporary South African landscape. While it is impossible to escape the consequences of our past, it is also necessary to grapple with our current situation. In creating new musical theatre texts for a new South Africa, I believe that it is important to recognise that our present is as diverse and as dramatically compelling as our past.

The lack of financial and audience support for South African musical theatre productions has prompted an alarming trend in the new works that surface: a tendency to emulate elements of overseas productions in order to induce a similar response from our local audiences. This is clearly visible in Vere: 'n musical, which premiered at the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees. Although the show had a sophisticated score by Janine Neethling, Deon Opperman's book was derivative of any number of American musicals of the "golden age": the depiction of the pre-World War I Oudtshoorn community was strongly reminiscent of Oklahoma!, the central mixed race love story was imitative of West Side Story (1957), while the dismantling of the community after the decline of the ostrich feather boom clearly resonated with the closing scenes of Fiddler on the Roof (1964); this quality was similarly reflected in the direction and design of the show. As such, the show was not intrinsically South African; the community in the play was influenced by American value systems. Indeed, the historical inaccuracies of the play and the simplification of its themes were highlighted by Wilhelm Snyman in his review of the show:

Late 20th-century attitudes are imposed upon early 20th-century characters; the women and the coloured characters are too emancipated to be believable, while the men, except for the Jew Zimmerman and Chris-Jan, are parodies of patriarchy. (2001: online)

I believe that the type of imitation described above inhibits the development of an inherently South African musical theatre tradition. The underlying structural principle of the American musical play is useful: integrate the dialogue, lyrics, music, design and staging – 'an approach that... produces a different result every time it is applied' (Mordden 1983: 142). There are elements common to many musical plays, such as extended musical scenes, the dream ballet, and the way that music functions as a language within the structure of the play. However, creating a successful original

musical play cannot be reduced to a formula that merely assimilates structural elements from different musicals into a new configuration.

House of Shadows is about a South African family and much of the action takes place in the present. As such, the past of the family is influenced by the events in South Africa prior to 1994 but this creates the context for the action rather than serving as the focus of the action. I felt that my choice of characters had to reflect the cultural diversity of our lives today. However, I did not include any characters simply for the sake of this kind of representation. Ultimately, the characters were chosen for the interesting resonances they would add to the themes of the play. Thus, including the character of Dorothy presented a particularly widespread alternative family form in recent South African history: the family with the second mother, the surrogate mother, the African mother. The character was based on memories of growing up under the supervision of my nanny, Vuyiswa Grootboom, as well as on the more recent experience of her presence in my family after her retirement until her death in 2001². I had to identify a strategy for representing her culture as a Xhosa woman without being patronising or reductive, which would allow me to follow through on my opinions of identity and diversity in South African musical theatre texts. My interaction with Gcina Mhlope during her residency in the Drama Department convinced me that the African storytelling tradition could reveal, in performance, more subtle textures within the character while rooting the play within the South African cultural landscape if I could find a Xhosa story that would work allegorically with the action of the play. One story that particularly resonated with my ideas for House of Shadows was “The Boy Who Could Not Speak”, as recorded by Harold Scheub (1990: 138-163). The conceptual implications of including this story within

² This autobiographical device is frequently used by South African writers. Other examples include Pamela Gien’s The Syringa Tree, which premiered in New York in 2000 and is, at the time of writing, being performed in Cape Town for the first time.

the structure of a musical play are discussed in several sections of the following chapters, most notably in Chapter Three, under the heading “Contest”. Because House of Shadows is a musical, I felt it was also important to provide Dorothy with a Xhosa song to establish a sense of cultural credibility at the start of the play. The song “Ngamany’ Amaxesha” was sung during her first entrance and although this worked for the character, the song functioned less successfully in the service of the play as a whole. This point is explored more fully in section on the direction of House of Shadows in Chapter Two.

Language was another element used in House of Shadows to establish culture, particularly for the characters of Dorothy, as a Xhosa woman, and Neall, Steyn and Swart who were coloured. The language for Neall was constructed to be almost self-consciously correct, indicating the background of his character. Changes were minimal in this character’s dialogue in the translation from text to performance³. In contrast, I allowed Thoko Ntshinga, Talia Egelhof and Nathan Fredericks to develop their written texts, firstly by means of a series of workshops in the first week of rehearsals and secondly by allowing them to continue adding interjections in Xhosa and Afrikaans throughout the process. This gave a more natural flow to the spoken word and added credibility to the characters. This also helped to point up the constructed nature of Neall’s speech. I believe that one of the successful aspects of House of Shadows as a musical play is that, because of the context in which the story plays out, the incorporation of the Xhosa storytelling tradition and the use of language, the play is inherently South African: the setting of the play could not be changed without changing the entire play.

³ In the scene leading up to the song, “Home”, there were originally a few lines in the text that described Maria’s reaction to her son’s choice of a coloured boyfriend in the scene. This was deleted about halfway through the rehearsal process because the information did not have a tremendous impact on the action of the play and slowed down the build into the imminent musical number.

CHAPTER TWO: HOUSE OF SHADOWS AS MUSICAL PLAY

2.1 The Play

To locate House of Shadows in the context of musical theatre practice, I believe it is necessary to briefly identify some of the primary forms that the musical takes.

Musical theatre texts can be divided into two broad categories: book musicals, which are created from a narrative idea and typically make use of a linear narrative structure, and concept musicals, which are used to explore an idea and are often non-linear and fragmented in their structure. Book musicals can be divided into two further sub-divisions: the musical comedy and the musical play. The musical comedy 'treats its subject matter through the lenses of burlesque, parody, or satire' and was the dominant form of musical theatre from the late 1800s until the early 1940s (Clum 1999: 11). Although the musical play and the concept musical have enjoyed greater popularity since then, the production of musical comedies is still regular and the popularity of the form has intensified in the past five years.

The musical play was developed from the traditions of melodrama and operetta. After World War I, the American public lost interest in operettas imported from central Europe, and American composers and lyricists, most prominently Otto Harbach, Sigmund Romberg and Oscar Hammerstein II began to create new operettas including The Desert Song (1926) and The New Moon (1927). In 1927, Hammerstein collaborated with Jerome Kern to create Show Boat, in which Hammerstein experimented with elements that would become popularised after the premiere of Oklahoma!. These include the combination of dialogue and music to create musical scenes, the use of segues and underscoring to bind the score, the inclusion of the dream ballet as a device to explore the subtext of the play, the use of design as a conceptual element rather than mere spectacle, and a style of direction

that sought to integrate each of these elements to create a unified and unique musical play.

Musical plays, like operettas, make use of sentimentality and are more often than not 'set in the past and based on serious "romantic" stories' (Clum 1999: 15). Unlike operetta, the musical play relocates the action from the exotic to the indigenous, and when foreign settings are used, the creators of musical plays make a serious attempt to incorporate elements of the actual cultural setting in their writing. These traits were particularly true of musical plays in the 1940s and 1950s, as well as in the mega-musicals that dominated commercial musical theatre during the 1980s. Musicals set in or near the present day were most likely satirical musical comedies like How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying (1962) or The Full Monty (2000) or deconstructive concept musicals, from Allegro (1945) to Brooklyn (2004). Although there were exceptions like South Pacific (1949) and West Side Story (1957), only recently has there been a noticeable shift in the content of musical plays towards contemporary stories as well as a keener interest in exploring the musicality of our everyday lives. This new wave of musical plays includes stylistically and musically diverse productions such as RENT (1996) and Caroline, or Change (2003), and this conception of the contemporary musical play was a reference for the creation of House of Shadows. I wanted to employ the principles of the musical play in telling a contemporary South African story.

Almost immediately after I began work on the project in June 2004, I realised that one of the primary challenges in creating such a musical was that the "everyday" context in which the action occurred seemed to be at odds with the heightened nature of the form. Aaron Frankel (2000: 7), a musical theatre director who also leads workshops in writing musical theatre texts, observes:

Musical theatre may be getting more real, but not more realistic. A realistic play closes in on its subject, while a musical book opens up its subject, freeing it to become less literal.

Often a musical opens up its source material by multiplying settings and adding characters. I felt that this kind of expansion would not serve House of Shadows thematically: to the audience, the house had to seem inescapable, shutting down the lives of the characters that lived there. Only concrete decisions leading to real, self-actualising actions allow the characters to escape. The story was focused on a young man, named Andrew, who feels that he is suppressed by his mother and the traditions of his family. The climatic moment of the play would be when Andrew individuated himself from the family. However, building to this kind of climax musically seemed inconceivable within the domestic setting of the play, even though I felt confident that certain songs might work in this context – particularly establishing and situational numbers like “Home” and “Find the Rainbow”. It was clear that the house, as a central image of the play, needed to function metaphorically as well as literally but at the start of the process I could not identify a strategy that could open up the image in this manner.

At this point, I would like to introduce a psychological concept that I believe was a catalyst in identifying how I could transform the image of the house in the play, which also influenced the presentation of this strategy in performance. The adaptive unconscious is a mental tool through which people evaluate situations and establish objectives for taking action even while consciously dealing with other situations (Wilson 2002). While I was actively searching for methods of enriching the premise for House of Shadows, I had a vivid dream in which a boy confronted a series of disembodied souls inside a mysterious hotel-like building. This created a new perspective of the house in my mind, one that could support my interest in fantasy and the subconscious while developing new implications for the house as an

image in the play. As well as the literal house in which the family lived and functioned on a daily basis, Andrew could dream up a distorted version of his home, where he would face heightened versions of the people in his life, discover the truth about his situation and articulate this recognition in an independent voice.

I felt that this sub-textual exploration of the characters and their experiences could be staged by using and transforming the conventions of the dream ballet. The traditional dream ballet served as an illustration of the emotional content of the characters without providing profound new revelations in character. As a block of action in House of Shadows, the dream ballet would carry the narrative further and bring it to its climax. The idea of creating alternative versions of the characters for the dream ballet tied in with Jungian dream symbolism, in which the notion of the shadow 'represents unknown or little-known attributes and qualities of the ego' (Jung 1964: 168). Andrew, as the linking character between reality and fantasy within the play would discover himself as a 'shadow figure (that) pushes itself past the conscious ego into the foreground' allowing him to redefine himself as 'the proper carrier of fate, through whom everything happens' (p. 294). This opened up the material psychologically – Andrew would consciously experience the world of his adaptive subconscious. Additionally, the presentational style I envisioned for the sequence would enable me, as a director, to shape the action towards a musical and dramatic climax without losing the central image of the house in the play.

With the premise of the play in place, I had to find a spine for the play – the fundamental dramatic root, which 'essentializes all the seeding and shapes all the growing' (Frankel 2000: 8). This condensation of the action of the play had to reflect the main characters and provide a sense of the conflict between them in order to guide the writing and direction of the play. An earlier project in the Masters course had provided some ideas for the content of the play; this was a solo performance

piece developed from autobiographical writing done in one of the core modules of the course. The theme of that piece was departure, focusing specifically upon the individuation of the young adult from the family unit, emphasising the roles of three characters in that process: the narrator, his lover and a portrait of the narrator's mother to which the monologue was spoken. I discussed my solo project and the images from my dream with my gay friends and acquaintances. Almost without exception, these conversations highlighted the relationship between gay men and their mothers, and the issues surrounding coming out, the introduction of partners and the difficulties of stepping out from the control of the maternal parent. Fathers rarely featured in the stories I heard, serving as footnotes to the experiences of the men with whom I conversed. In House of Shadows, I chose to word the primary action as follows: "a son lets go of his mother and vice versa". "Lets go" is a present, active verb phrase that implies several related phrases that would help create the central conflict of the play, including "pushes away", "clings to" and "holds on". This action would eventually characterise not only the mother-son relationship but all the relationships in the play, thus influencing the tone of the play as a whole. After our first run through, the vocal coach, Anthea Haupt, mentioned in her response to the play that "everybody has their own house of shadows". I believe that this universal quality was the greatest strength of the text and that, if Andrew's triumph had been more strongly depicted in staging and performance, the enlightenment that I was trying to create around the individuating process would have been more readily received by the audience.

With images, ideas, characters and a basic story in mind, I began to write the book of House of Shadows, working on the score as I went along. The underlying principle of the musical play is that each part contributes to the whole: Mordden (1983: 107) describes the musical play as 'protean', 'adherent of its own devices and

no others'. The rest of this chapter examines the integration of the book, score, songs, design and direction of House of Shadows, focusing on how each individual element contributed to the world of the play as a whole.

2.2 The Book

The book of a musical, created from the original concept and idea, gives structure to the narrative of a musical. Frankel likens the relationship of the book to a musical with the lead sheet to the song:

A lead sheet specifies everything that is basic to a song. The book may be regarded as the lead sheet of a musical. It contains everything that appears on the stage. Songwriters who expect to write the songs by themselves and leave the bookwriting to someone else are picking the hardest way to get the songs right (2000: 5).

Song, dance, design and direction all depend on the book, which binds the respective elements of a musical into an integrated theatrical unit⁴. There are several important moments that the book of a musical needs to emphasise: the opening, the climax and curtain of the first act, the opening of the second act, the climax of the second act and the dénouement. House of Shadows was presented in one act, but each of these elements played an important part in shaping the play in its current form.

The compressed form of the musical requires that several elements be established in the opening sequence of the play: genre, style, the world of the play, concept, rhythm, and the themes. While this lays out the evening's journey for the audience, the sequence should also occur in a manner that creates questions for the rest of the story in the mind of the audience. House of Shadows opens with a

⁴ The book of House of Shadows is included as an appendix to this paper. However, I must highlight one further implication of Frankel's comparison between the book and the lead sheet: neither can encompass the full complexity of the musical in performance. For this reason, a video recording of the production is included on DVD as a part of this package.

striking image of the deceased Maria in a portrait on the wall, accompanied by a musical “Prelude”. As Andrew walked through the house, various sound effects played between the musical phrases, indicating that the past had a significant bearing on the relationship between Andrew and Maria. In the performance of the play, the music created the right mood, while the sound effects – footsteps, a muffled argument and a door slamming – disrupted the rhythm of the scene and should have been removed. Indeed, the aspects of the relationship that were established by the sound effects are better achieved in the brief dialogue that follows, where the voices are not disembodied from the characters. The content of the dialogue also reveals the nature of the relationship between mother and son, clarifying that the narrative will focus on characters who ‘are already involved in a relationship, with mounting consequences’ (Frankel 2000: 50). The climax of the play is a transaction in which Andrew and Maria carry out the primary action of the play – “a son lets go of his mother and vice versa” – and this is set in motion for the audience in this opening sequence. The dialogue also introduces Dorothy, who enters singing a song in Xhosa, “Ngamany’ Amaxesha”, which was all but thrown away in its delivery and staging. The problems created by this choice are discussed in greater detail in the section on the direction of the play below.

After the song, Dorothy tells the first segment of the Sikhuluma story before the sequence closes with Maria’s departure. These latter chunks of action in the sequence occur in two separate but intrinsically linked worlds. Although both are part of Andrew’s memory in as far as the main action of the play is seen completely from Andrew’s point of view, the former is part of Andrew’s direct experience (Dorothy actually told Andrew the story), while the latter is part of Andrew’s fantastic recreation of events (Andrew never actually saw Maria leaving). Maria’s departure was accompanied by a musical segue, “Remember”, an isolated musical theme,

which never returns in the play. I think it would be more useful for the segue to pick up the musical theme of “Ngaman’ Amaxesha”. In this way, the pantomime sequence in which Maria leaves the house would resonate more strongly with the departure of the mother in the Sikhuluma story while still pushing the narrative of the play forward. This, along with the removal of the sound effects, would have given the scene a more fluid rhythm, indicating the easy flow between past and present, reality and fantasy, representation and presentation, and action and storytelling throughout the play.

Although House of Shadows played without an interval, there was a definite shift in energy that divided the show into two “acts”. The “first act” concluded with the scene that led into the song “Find the Rainbow”, which ‘resolved (some of the plot) while leaving hanging threads that will be tied up at the finale’ (Citron 1997: 143). The song, sung by Dorothy, functions in the same way as “You’ll Never Walk Alone” in Carousel (1945) or “Climb Ev’ry Mountain” in The Sound of Music (1959): a mother figure gives advice to the protagonist that directly influences the ultimate outcome of the play. By singing the lyric, “find the rainbow deep within you”, Dorothy implies that Andrew already knows the solution to his problems, while the symbolic value of the rainbow within the gay community makes the choice of metaphor particularly apt. Furthermore, the image prompts an association with the “rainbow nation” of South Africa, supporting the geographic and cultural location of the play. Finally, the classical symbolism of rainbows as ‘bridges used by gods and heroes when they travel between this Earth and the Otherworld’ indicates the journey that Andrew will make to his fantastical house of shadows and the fact that ‘rainbows are generally heralds of good things to come and are linked to the cycle of rebirth’ suggests the possibility for resolution within the narrative (Chevalier & Gheerbrant 1994: 783-5). This precipitates the opening of the “second act” so that, although the

audience may expect the events that occur, 'the pleasure comes from watching *how* it happens' (Citron 1997: 152).

The "second act" of House of Shadows began with the sound of a heartbeat imitated in the bass line of the music juxtaposed with the image of Andrew in bed. A recorded conversation between Dorothy and Maria followed, one that made sense contextually in terms of the narrative but which purposefully blurred the status between Dorothy, the maid, who was giving orders to Maria, her employer. This prepares us for Dorothy's role in the following sequence, the "dream ballet" in which she holds the highest status until Andrew discovers the power of his own voice, an event which she precipitates. After the voiceover, Andrew got out of bed and exited, while the cast transformed the space. When he re-entered, Andrew found himself in a new environment with elements of the house in the background. I believe the sequence would have played more strongly if I had placed the scene change during the phone conversation so that Andrew never left the stage. He would have walked down the stairs into the newly arranged space, lending a more surreal tone to the opening of the sequence and really playing into the idea that he was consciously experiencing the effects of his adaptive unconscious.

"House of Shadows", the musical number that opens the "second act", indicates the start of the dream ballet and sets the presentational style of the sequence, providing the audience with a set of recognisable conventions that allowed them to connect with the dramatic content in this part of the play. Although I think that this is partly why the response to this section was always more substantial than in the rest of the play, I think (most of) the cast were more equipped to elicit this kind of response because they could identify more easily with the presentational style in which the numbers were staged. Consequently, they adjusted the size of their performances so that, even though they did not all realise the absolutely

crystallized style required in the sequence, the audience was able to take pleasure in the way the play built to its climax. The role of the dream ballet in House of Shadows and the eleven o'clock (or climactic) number, "Andrew", are discussed in greater detail in chapter three of this paper, under the headings "Display" and "Contest".

The dénouement of a musical needs to be more than the traditional 'falling action' or 'artistic return to reality' that the term implies: indeed, the closing sequence of a musical needs to 'pull the foregoing themes together in an exciting fashion' (Citron 1997: 52). In House of Shadows, the final sequence began with the final section of "The Boy Who Could Not Speak" (Appendix 1 p. 86). As Dorothy told the story of the mother's death, Maria was seen as she approached the moment of her own death. The final line of the monologue, "he told their story in his own voice" (p. 87), triggers the action of the final scene, which shows the consequences of the climax of the play: Andrew's recognition of his own voice allows him to interact meaningfully with his mother and to grieve her death. He is able to fulfil his role in family tradition without feeling as if he has lost his individuality, and his ability to articulate the stories of his life in his own words is symbolised in the book he presents to Dorothy.

Music was used to support these moments: a reprise of "Light a Candle" and the underscoring used to close the play. In the reprise of "Light a Candle", Andrew starts off quoting the lyrics sung to him by Dorothy in the first version of the song. This indicates that his attitude has changed; he has accepted the advice that Dorothy gave him and found its value in his own experience. The blocking supports this: the first version of the song was prompted by Andrew packing the candles into the cupboard, indicating his struggle with the traditions of his family; here he unpacks and lights the first candle in memory of his mother, demonstrating that he has gained perspective on the role of tradition in the journey of the individual. The underscoring,

which manipulates the melody and arrangement of “Home” and particularly the three notes on which the final two “welcome home” phrases were sung, plays without irony: Andrew’s desire to understand the concept of home as a place that he can call his own (p. 55) has been achieved. The mother has let go of the son and the son has let go of his mother.

2.3 The Score

The score of a musical play needs to be intricately linked to the drama of the play. In House of Shadows, the score has two primary functions in the dramatic context of the play. Firstly, the songs establish and then indicate developments in the characters and their relationships: this ‘gives point and texture’ to the narrative and modulates the conflict in the play by using music to ‘raise its pressures or discharge them’ (Frankel 2000: 7). Although all the characters have songs in the “real” world of the play as well as in the dream ballet, only Dorothy has songs that exist in more than one plane from the start of the play.

“Ngamany’ Amaxesha” plays within Andrew’s memory, linking the real action of the play to the fantastical action of the dream ballet. This strategy, which was never fully realised in the performance of House of Shadows, is discussed in the section on direction below. Dorothy’s solo in “Home” forms part of her role as storyteller within the production, interweaving the Sikhuluma story with the action of the play. The songs “Light a Candle” and “Find the Rainbow” establish Dorothy’s role as mentor to the family: her ability to move between the planes of story and action give her insight into the situation. The passing on of this ability is illustrated musically by Andrew’s reprise of “Light a Candle” and visually by the book of stories that Andrew presents to her in the closing scene.

The relationship between Andrew and Maria is established musically in the song “Home”. This song provides each character with a solo musical theme, which is repeated in counterpoint. In the counterpoint section, Andrew’s lines ‘This house that’s in the shadows of my mind deserves a second try / But is it somewhere I can call my own’ overlap with Maria’s ‘Find your way back home to me / Where my arms can safely guide you’ (Appendix 1 p. 55). This juxtaposes his doubts about his return and his need to follow his own path alongside her desire to hold on to him a little longer. In the next interaction between mother and son, Maria’s song, “Something More”, silences Andrew; her hold over him is so strong that he cannot establish his own musical theme to combat her. Andrew actually sings very little in the first half and, in a way, this part of the play is about Andrew forgetting how to sing. After “Home”, the events of the play suppress his musical spirit, which is finally surrendered in “I Guess This is Goodbye” when Neall, Andrew’s last link to the outside world, leaves the house.

Andrew and Neall are also musically connected in “Home”. Whereas Andrew’s connection with Maria is made in the release of the song, his connection with Neall is made in the verse. The seeds of the conflict that finally causes their separation are planted here: while Andrew sings about ‘coming home’, Neall hopes that the ‘walls (of the house) won’t come between (them)’ (*ibid.*). This is precisely what happens in their argument, which leads into “I Guess This is Goodbye”. Neall’s song in the dream ballet, “The One I’ll Always Carry in My Heart”, is one of the musical themes that spurs on Andrew’s ability to let go of everything Maria represents to him. This song uses the harmonic structure of the chorus of Maria’s “Something More” in its release. By changing the meaning of the lyrics from “you are worthless and you change” to “I love you just the way you are” and writing a new

melody line, the destructive intention of the previous song is inverted and helps Andrew to recognise his own worth.

If the “first act” is about Andrew forgetting how to sing, his process of self-discovery in the second act is about him learning how to sing again, first by appropriating the musical themes of others, with a new set of lyrics to indicate the evolution of his character, and then in his own musical theme. As such, the song that he sings, “Andrew”, was intended to draw the musical themes of the evening together and to give Andrew a theme of his own to establish his individuation. The success of this song is evaluated in the section on communal renewal in the third chapter of this paper.

The second function of the score in House of Shadows is to bind the elements of the play together as a whole. To achieve this, I made use of a number of segues and some underscoring, most noticeably in the transitions from dramatic action into the storytelling sequences. The first segment of the Sikhuluma story was introduced by the song “Ngamany’ Amaxhesa”. An instrumental arrangement of this number introduced the final instalment of that story, and this created a musical symmetry that helped to balance the inclusion of the story within the framework of the play. The second section of the story was part of the song “Home” and various phrases from this song linked the other sections of the Sikhuluma story together. The segue into the part of the story that Dorothy tells after Maria’s voice is heard on the speaker phone used the melody of Maria’s lines in the song, while the following segment, in which Sikhuluma’s brothers die, used an arrangement of the song in a minor key. In this way, the score of House of Shadows kept the momentum of the show going while creating expansive associations with the wider action of the play. The music did not interrupt the book; it was intricately woven into the narrative of the play.

2.4 The Design

In designing the stage for House of Shadows, I had to create a set that represented both the literal, functional house in which the Stevens family lived on a daily basis as well as the metaphorical, conceptual impression of the house that Andrew saw in his mind. The wooden pillars and high ceiling of the Arena Theatre, augmented with wooden furniture and panelling, were useful in indicating the reality of suburban houses in Walmer, Port Elizabeth. To indicate the separation of the house from the world outside, I felt that it was important to show a space outside the house and to imply a space beyond the house. To achieve this, I left the space where the wall would have been in the centre arch open. Through this gap, a white picket fence – a popular symbol for the suburban experience in film and television – was visible as an icon that isolated this community from the outside world. This idea was most clearly illustrated in staging of the musical number “Home” where Maria, who had run away to Knysna, was seen beyond the boundary of the fence while the other characters sang from inside the house.

My choice to use various shades of the blue throughout the set was motivated by the link between the colour and the spiritual areas of the unconscious mind in Jungian dream symbolism. I felt that using elements of Jungian symbolism was appropriate, given the choice to utilise a “dream ballet” within the structure of the narrative and also because of the references to shadows in the play, discussed above. I also chose blue for its elusive and transformative qualities; ‘(i)ndifferent and unafraid, centred solely upon itself, blue is not of this world: it evokes the idea of eternity, calm, lofty, superhuman, inhuman even’ (Chevalier & Gheerbrant 1994: 103). In performance, the blue objects seemed to glow under the light, giving the objects greater presence in the space while simultaneously bestowing them with an

ethereal quality. This created a continual tension between reality and fantasy in the space, foreshadowing the moment when the “dream ballet” becomes the dominant mode of expression in the play.

The arrangement of the furniture in the space purposefully made movement patterns slightly awkward so that it became difficult for Andrew to secure a place in which he held a higher status than the other characters in the play. For example, in the argument between Andrew and Neall (Appendix 1 pp. 68 - 71), the arrangement of the furniture had a fundamental influence on the movement patterns of the characters in the scene. The limited space in the bedroom meant that Andrew had to move downstairs to escape from the confrontation. Neall follows him and Andrew becomes trapped between the pictures on the wall, which symbolise everything that suppresses his individuation, and Neall, who he is trying to avoid. In this way, the house becomes Maria's co-agent in clinging onto her son by shutting down opportunities for Andrew, supporting the build-up towards the central action of the play.

2.5 Direction

Musical theatre, like all theatre, is an act of communication, which displays two relevant utterances: the dramatic text and the performance text. The director is the creative medium through which the transformation from drama to theatre occurs. In the development of new musicals, the rehearsal process begins with as much of the book and score in place as possible, even though there might be numerous changes before opening night. Below I shall discuss the casting of House of Shadows and consider the relationship between my role as writer-composer and director of the play during the rehearsal period for the show.

Casting House of Shadows within the context of an active tertiary institution was a difficult process. The remaining students in the now defunct musical theatre stream were inappropriate for the characters, while most of the students in the acting and theatre-making streams of the undergraduate Theatre and Performance course at that time had little experience in musical theatre performance beyond high school productions. Several potential cast members had performed in the musical revue, We Got Rhythm... and All That Jazz, which I had directed for the Drama Department in 2003, and I identified other actors with a sense of musicality by working through musical numbers with them in the second quarter of 2004. The difference in vocal skills from person to person was negligible – the voices all displayed a similar, untrained quality with the potential for development during the rehearsal process – so when I chose my cast I focused largely on their acting ability as well as the way that their individual textures resonated with the characters they were playing. By these means, I believe that I gathered the best possible cast, as individuals and as an ensemble, from those available to participate in the production. The role of Dorothy was played Thoko Ntshinga, a lecturer in the department, while the cast members drawn from the student body included: Jason Potgieter (Andrew), Kati Francis (Maria), Ruben Engel (Neall), Talia Egelhof (Steyn), Nathan Fredericks (Swart) and two backup vocalists for the dream ballet, Graham Phillips and Kim Kerfoot. While their achievement was remarkable and the rehearsal process of House of Shadows challenging and rewarding, the musical inexperience of this cast necessitated spending a high proportion of our rehearsal time teaching the cast basic singing and musical theatre performance technique. This made musical rewrites very difficult to incorporate particularly in the later stages of rehearsals. Moreover, although good acting should be at the core of musical theatre performances – and I believe that the cast contributed a great deal of texture to the

roles – the vocal performance of the score was less accomplished than it needed to be and sacrifices were made in terms of the keys to accommodate the performers. In my composition of the score, I had imagined that, for example, Andrew would be a tenor role, while Neall would be a baritone and this would be a further tool for individual characterisation as well as defining some aspects of the relationships on stage. However, I had to accommodate the vocal abilities of the cast and, even though the voices developed during the rehearsal period, the aural dynamics of the score as a whole were diminished because the keys of the songs fell into a similar range. I think that if the cast had either been more secure in their vocal deliveries or trusted the conventions of presenting song within the conventions of a musical play, the score would have been more compelling to the audience. As a writer, it was frustrating to see the effect of the score reduced, but as a director I knew that if the actors were uncomfortable, the audience would be too. I had to focus on finding the best way to allow this group of actors to interpret the text and simultaneously nurture the skills required to extend the acting into the presentation of the songs while soliciting the best possible vocal performances from the cast. The effect of the casting on the performance of House of Shadows, specifically in the song “Andrew”, is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three under the heading “Communal Renewal”.

The director of a musical acts as the ‘reinscriber of the authorial text’ (Cole 1992: 181) and the principle that fuels the creation of a performance text from a dramatic text is that the dramatic text is unfinished. Once the writer has completed his/her task, the director applies to the text a ‘systematic approach of undoing’ that will serve as the basis for his/her staging (*ibid.*). This “undoing” is a process of decoding, which precedes the encoding process that will result in a performance text. In House of Shadows, this process was complicated because I had to direct the

play while the text was in the process of being completed and revised. I shall illustrate this by discussing parts of the opening sequence as they were translated from text into performance.

When writing the play, I didn't want to have an opening number for the sake of opening things "big". As a writer, I found it more interesting dramatically to hold back the first complex number in the play for the moment of Andrew's return to the house in the second sequence of the play and part of my enquiry as a writer was to experiment with the length of time that this first moment of heightened emotion could be delayed. As such, I inserted "Ngamany' Amaxehsa" – a short, diegetic song that Dorothy sang before the first storytelling segment. The first sequence was staged in various chunks and, when it was put together in the rehearsal room, this choice seemed to work. Even when the sequence played in the context of a run through, it appeared to be one of the more successful parts of the play. As a director, I had to be extremely careful to balance the time I spent preparing for rehearsals and the time I spent on rewrites. As such, the new material that was required for later scenes and the climactic dream ballet took precedence at this stage of rehearsal and the opening sequence was left to play as is. Had I been completely focused on directing House of Shadows, I may have anticipated what came to light when we first ran the play in the venue. In performance, where Dorothy remained unseen to most of the audience until halfway through "Ngamany' Amaxehsa", the moment was not theatrically viable: the audience needed a more extended musical hook sooner in the piece. As a director, my advice to myself as a writer was to find a solution.

My solution would be to build "Ngamany' Amaxehsa" into a bigger number, incorporating the musical "House of Shadows" theme, since originally both of these were envisaged as one song. Bringing the two halves of the song back together in this sequence would transform the piece into a potential production number for the

company, which would foreshadow the fantasy that spills from Andrew's mind in the dream ballet. Also, the opening of each "act" would play symmetrically: musically, the "House of Shadows" theme would be present in both sequences. However, as a writer-director, I knew there were more pressing problems later in the piece:

Andrew's climatic song had to be edited and rearranged, the staging of "House of Shadows" in the dream ballet had to be reworked and the technical aspects of the production had to come into play. Had the opening number been rewritten at this point, it would have been incorporated into the show during the last two days of rehearsals. As a writer, I realised how important this change could be for the play; as a director, I knew that the cast would have struggled musically with the sequence and that we needed those last days to build the rhythm of the show. Additionally, as a musical theatre scholar, I knew that new musicals do not develop from conception to the form they ultimately take in six months and this informed my decision to keep the current opening sequence for this run of the show.

The musical play requires a style of directing that integrates the parts of the play into a whole. I believe that this is where my role as author of the House of Shadows was valuable. Because I had written the play, I possessed the knowledge of how the score created character, gave structure to the play and developed the drama of the book and I believe that this knowledge was reflected in performance. My direction of House of Shadows was flawed in that it did not transform the piece as much as it translated the text into performance. I think this is the greatest challenge for the writer as director: to reconstruct the text as if approaching it afresh. Generally, I feel that I should have pushed for a greater urgency in the action of the play as it moved towards the dream ballet so that this climactic sequence of the play could have taken flight more easily. In this way, the opportunity for the audience to join in with our celebration of the resolution of the central conflict of the play would

truly have been created. Even so, I believe the process was extremely valuable to play as a work in progress. The work I did as a director helped me to identify areas that impede the expression of the themes, ideas and feelings that are at the core of the play, providing a solid foundation for my return to the text as writer, lyricist and composer.

CHAPTER THREE: HOUSE OF SHADOWS AS FESTIVE THEATRE

3.1 Introduction

As a theatre-maker, I am constantly seeking new, conceptual methods of reading musicals. White (1995: 64-66) suggests that the four key structural elements of festive theatre – display, contest, celebration and ceremony – and its objective of communal renewal, as established in classical Greek theatre, are manifest in later forms of theatre, including classical ballet, opera and musical theatre.

Each of these forms is a synergetic theatrical event in which the 'combination of drama, music, dance, scenery and virtuoso performance are the collective means' through which 'the hero and heroine (and their helpers) are the agents' for 'communal renewal' (p. 64). While ballet and opera are complex performance systems in their own right, the musical displays the characteristic of incorporating a wider range of multi-modal expressions into its makeup. By definition, both ballet and opera exclude dialogue, while the scenery in each often remains functional – a backdrop against which the performance is played. Furthermore, while all three forms of theatre display a clearly defined, permanent relationship between music, dance and dramatic continuity within the theatrical vehicle, ballet and opera are rooted in tradition and technique, while the musical uses drama to integrate the elements of music and dance into a whole, as shown in my deconstruction of House of Shadows in Chapter Two.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine White's proposal in the context of musical theatre practice. I will examine whether and, if so, how the structural elements of festive theatre and the notion of communal renewal found expression in House of Shadows and offer some of my impressions regarding the validity of the

framework as a tool for taking the objectives of musical theatre beyond mere diversion.

3.2 Display

'Display', refers to the 'means by which the community (on stage or off) can review, proclaim or celebrate its important values, traditions and accomplishments' (p.64).

The most straightforward way of illustrating this concept is to look at a musical with a large chorus, where the community is physically represented onstage. In RENT (1996), for example, the musical number "La Vie Boheme" is a manifesto of the community of artists in the play. They list their individual passions and obsessions, thus stating their opposition to the corporate, commercial, all-for-profit society in which they find themselves, represented chiefly in the play by Benjamin Coffin III, a bohemian-turned-businessman, and Alexi Darling, the producer of a commercial television show. House of Shadows was never conceptualised as a large scale musical with a chorus. This meant that characteristic qualities of the complex web of communities represented by the characters in the play had to be expressed through the actions of individuals and small groups, like Maria, Dorothy and the police officers.

The community that creates the dramatic context for the action of House of Shadows is the white, middle class, suburban community of Walmer in Port Elizabeth. To locate and display the dominant ideology of the community at large, I focused on the family as the primary unit of suburban existence. People who challenge the stability of the family are pushed to the margins. This includes homosexuals, like Andrew, who threaten the continuity of the family unit. I chose to signify the stance of the family and the community towards homosexuality by writing a song for Maria, the matriarch of the Stevens family. "Something More" is Maria's

attempt to convince Andrew that his life could be more meaningful, implying that his homosexuality is the reason for his insignificance. Musically, I made use of contrasting melodic rhythms for the verse and chorus: the verses were patterned to an edgy vamp and highlighted Maria's perceived problems with Andrew's lifestyle, while a more lyrical chorus offered him her dream solution and the idea that familial continuity is important. In this way, the attitude of the community was unambiguously declared by Maria in song.

In addition to rooting the play within the South African cultural landscape, making use of the African storytelling tradition also offered possibilities for extending the characterisation of Dorothy because the act of storytelling functions as a display of her Xhosa heritage. The formal opening of the Xhosa storytelling tradition preceded the first section of the *Sikhuluma* story: the call and response phrase of "Kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi" and "Chosi". This specific exchange acknowledges the conventions of the Xhosa storytelling tradition and sometimes audience members joined in with the response. Dorothy's role as mentor to the family resonates with the role of the storyteller as 'the intellectual in... oral society' where the telling of stories 'looks forward to a future that has its roots deeply entwined in the past' (Scheub 1975: 88). The Stevens family is not aware of these implications; Maria, in particular, sees Dorothy exclusively in her role as "the maid". However, the action of the play enables Andrew to grasp the profundity of Dorothy's skills as mentor/storyteller. In the dream ballet, the conscious exploration of Andrew's adaptive unconscious, Dorothy's higher status is indicated in the character's attitude, costume and placement on the stage. Ntshinga's interpretation in that section of the play – as a diva enjoying every aspect of the importance that her status presents to her – particularly highlighted Dorothy's duality for the audience.

A third device, which I was able to utilise on a limited basis because of the size of the company, was to introduce other community members into the action of the play. I briefly considered using a minister or a lay pastor, which would have been appropriately realistic considering the large number of churches in Walmer and the focus on pastoral care that is central to the more charismatic congregations there. However, I felt that this would merely elucidate the origins of Maria's attitude towards Andrew's homosexuality. Instead, I felt that I needed to create characters that added dimension to the audience's understanding of the community. Detective Steyn and Officer Swart, the members of the police force who investigate Maria's disappearance in the play, offered the kind of extension I was seeking. Their role as protectors of society made them a part of the community, shaping their attitudes towards the other characters in the play. This is seen most clearly in Swart's reaction when Neall is introduced as Andrew's partner. However, their coloured status in a predominantly white, middle class suburb racially excludes them from the community. Much of the comedy in their scene develops from the fact that they do not realise this and the unabashed way in which they carry out their duties points towards the celebration mentioned in White's definition of display.

The dream ballet sequence, with its succession of musical numbers, was a series of character displays. Neall, the police officers and Maria each had an act that presented more complex aspects about themselves and their relationships to Andrew. These aspects are intuitively felt by Andrew within the realm of the adaptive unconscious but he has been unable to isolate these qualities in the confusion that dominates his reality. Each number drives Andrew toward the moment of his own display, the song in which he evaluates the perceptions of the people that surround him by appropriating their musical themes and announces his individuation in a new musical theme that is his own. In this way, Andrew finally discovers his own voice

and alters his attitude towards the community. The reaction of the community was not, in this version of the text or in the physical production, a key part of the action of the play. However, the response of the society over time is filtered through in Maria's death scene. I believe this change could have been illuminated more clearly had I directed Potgieter and Francis, as Andrew and Maria, to play the shift of status in their relationship more strongly. This would have beneficially contributed to the audience's understanding and acceptance of the new awareness of human experience that Andrew recognises in the play.

3.3 Contest

'Contest' manifests itself as "formal ritual combat which usually symbolizes a culture specific event and value system or tradition, while at the same time recalling more archetypal events, such as the defeat of evil or darkness, or the passing of the old year and the coming of the new' (White 1995: 64). I chose to explore this definition in two ways in House of Shadows: structurally, by using parallel narrative strands, and thematically, through the use of the device of a dream ballet.

The definition of 'contest' above indicates a dual view of the action in a piece of festive theatre: one contemporary and one mythological. I believed this could be reflected in the structure of House of Shadows by juxtaposing the story of Andrew and Maria with parts of a traditional African story, "The Boy Who Could Not Speak", as recorded by Harold Scheub (1990: 138-163). In "The Boy Who Could Not Speak", a mute boy named Sikhuluma is made to accompany his mother and brothers on a journey, following the death of his father. As they approach a mysterious homestead, Sikhuluma perceives that their lives are in danger and speaks for the first time, warning them not to enter the homestead. His mother ignores his advice and she is killed, as are the brothers, but Sikhuluma's discovery of

his own voice saves his life and he returns to his village. There is a broad connection between the respective journeys of Andrew and Sikhuluma: both travel away from home, both are mute in the presence of their mothers, both have to establish their own voice in opposition to their mother and both return home to tell the story when their journey is complete. Andrew and Sikhuluma both experience the primary action of the play: “a son lets go of his mother and vice versa”. The challenge of including the Sikhuluma story was to weave it into the play’s action so that the audience would be able to make meaningful, allegorical, metaphorical links between the two mother-son stories in the play. In this way, the Sikhuluma story could become an intrinsic part of the play rather than an isolated structural block.

One strategy for achieving this deepening of the relationship between the narrative strands was to reflect the Sikhuluma story within the visual design of House of Shadows. The first connection I created was between the seven memorial candles and the seven brothers in the story. After Dorothy tells the first segment of the story, she lights the candles in memory of Andrew’s father, signalling the start of the respective journeys that lead Sikhuluma and his brothers and Andrew away from home. During the third segment of the story, when Sikhuluma’s brothers die, Dorothy, as the storyteller, snuffs out all the candles but one. In the dialogue leading up to the song “Something More”, Maria extinguishes this candle. In both narrative strands, the mother ignores what her son is trying to say and, as such, suppresses the son’s voice. The struggle of the son to discover the power of his own voice in opposition to his mother represents the central contest of the play. After Maria’s death, when the conflict in both stories has been resolved, Andrew lights one candle in her memory, which remains burning as the lights fade at the close of the play, a symbol of Andrew’s triumph and Sikhuluma’s survival. The second connection was the link between the homestead and the setting for the dream ballet, where Andrew’s

thoughts are given form. In the second story segment of House of Shadows, Dorothy describes the homestead as it glimmers in the distance, a fire sending up 'smoke that danced with the shadows of the night as it twirled its way into the sky' (Appendix 1 p.60). This effect was literally created with light and smoke as the dream ballet began. The idea that there was some kind of fantastic being inside the homestead was supported by the silhouettes of the cast as they arrived on stage behind the glimmering bead curtain as well as in the sequined designs in their costumes. The final connection between Andrew's story and "The Boy Who Could Not Speak" is the red book, which Andrew presents to Dorothy at the end of this play. In this book, which is a vibrant red in opposition to the blues and browns of the set, the stories physically come together within the action of the play.

In the dream ballet, the narrative strands of the Sikhuluma and Andrew stories seem to diverge from one another. Sikhuluma refuses to go into the homestead but Andrew enters the "House of Shadows". Furthermore, in "The Boy Who Could Not Speak", a mysterious creature kills everyone who enters the homestead; in House of Shadows, Andrew survives the experience. Sikhuluma asserts his voice, stating that he will not follow his mother into the homestead. She enters alone and is killed. Sikhuluma has developed the strength to begin his own journey and lives to tell the tale when he returns to the village. The dream ballet represents, for Andrew, the ultimate test in his journey: inside the "House of Shadows", he must find a voice that asserts his needs, dreams and values in opposition to his mother or submit to the rules of her world. In the action of the play, Andrew has been reacting to Maria's actions and his inaction implies that he submits to her ideology; he has no option but to enter the "House of Shadows". Inside, his impressions of the people around him are paraded before his eyes as a series of performances. The penultimate act is a torch song sung by Maria, for the lost baby

boy she wants to hold in her arms forever. At this point, if Andrew cannot follow Maria with his own act, his spirit would die and an empty human shell would return to the normal plane of existence when the fantasy is over. The song that he sings, "Andrew" provided Andrew with a musical theme of his own with which to begin his solo journey, destroying the hold of the mother over her son.

The primary contest in House of Shadows is between mother and (gay) son, reflecting the archetypal struggle between the parent and child in the process of individuation. In the staging of the Sikhuluma story, I should have directed Ntshinga to highlight the moment of Sikhuluma's individuation more clearly – particularly as it followed the dream ballet, which presents the same moment in Andrew's journey as the climax of the play. The presentation of this moment is accentuated in the dream ballet because Maria and Andrew each have a song that states their relationship to the central action of "letting go" in the play. Maria's song, "Baby Boy Blue", highlighted the fact that she knows that she has to "let go" so that the audience could question the location and degree of "holding on" in the play. How much of the conflict between Andrew and Maria exists in reality? Is Andrew really fighting against his mother or with his impression of her? And how much is he holding on in spite of his desire to break free? Raising these questions in the mind of the audience implicates Andrew as well as Maria in the action "letting go". Because the events take place in his adaptive unconscious, he becomes aware of his part in the action and reacts to this recognition in the song, "Andrew". The actors understood this, as well as the fact that I was using the songs in the dream ballet to flesh out and complicate the characters. The delivery of character in the medium of song, particularly for Potgieter, was much better here than in the previous numbers and, as a result, the performances were delivered with greater confidence and a keener sense of the heightened musical theatre style. As such, the way in which the moment of

individuation plays out in House of Shadows creates a specific experience of the larger, universal contest represented by the play.

3.4 Celebration

Celebration commemorates 'the victory of the hero and heroine over the forces of the old society' (White 1995: 65). Like display, this idea is more easily visible in musicals with large choruses, where the final number is often a number with the precise intention of presenting the celebration of the community in their new state of being: in RENT, Mimi's survival is celebrated in song as the whole chorus comes together to sing a life-affirming "Finale B". In House of Shadows, I had no intention of bringing the cast back on stage for a rousing number; this would have been inappropriate given the manner in which I had handled the element of display in the musical and incongruent with the musical language of the domestic scenes. I also wanted to tie up the musical threads of the play so that the score, along with the book and the lyrics, functioned throughout the play as a focused and unifying theatrical element. To achieve this, I did not write any new music for the final scene, using instead two themes already present in the play. The first is a reprise of "Light a Candle", sung by Andrew, showing that the conflict within himself, represented physically by his mother, has been 'laid to rest' (Appendix 1 p. 89). Reprises in musical plays are only useful if they uncover the development in the characters between the dramatic moments when they appear and this return to "Light a Candle" creates the context for celebration in House of Shadows by implying that Andrew has gained the knowledge – the secret of letting go – that Dorothy gave to him when she sang the song earlier in the play. The second musical phrase, which recalls the song "Home", underscores the final lines of the play after Andrew has given Dorothy the book in which he has drawn together his experience and the stories told to him by

Dorothy. Andrew's victory is internal: he has found a way to "let go" of the things in his life that hold him back. I really wanted the closing of the play to be intimate, as warm as the opening was stark. Thus, I chose to hold back any obvious external celebration and used the score to indicate the joy that was implicit in the scene. I think this made the moment more powerful dramatically and the opportunity for the audience to respond to the new state of being realised in the play followed directly after in the curtain call.

Another aspect of celebration in festive theatre is the way in which 'major song and dance numbers are "turned out" and the audience responds with applause' (White 1995: 65). This was most successfully achieved in House of Shadows in the dream ballet, which was structured to the conventions of a musical revue. Indeed, the response from the audience in this sequence became a fundamental part of the scene and their spontaneous responses in the form of laughter and applause fed into the build of the scene towards its climax. The audience response to the other musical numbers varied from night to night, with the songs "Home", "Something More", "Find the Rainbow" drew the biggest responses. This was partly due to the choices made in staging the final moment of these particular songs: each had a strongly indicated ending musically and vocally as well as in the staging. I believe that a reconstructed version of "Ngamany' Amaxesha", as described above in the section on direction, would draw a similar response at an important time in the run of the play, when the audience is learning the conventions for their participation in the performance. The conscious performance quality of that number, which would foreshadow the dream ballet sequence, would create a mood in which the audience is comfortable to respond to the actors. Although I understand that part of their reluctance to respond was the result of, at times, poor vocal performances and discomfort with style and staging, I think an equal measure was due to the audience

not being able to establish their role in this musical as close to the start of the play as possible.

3.5 Ceremony

The element of ceremony indicates the aspects of the evening's proceedings that recognise the theatrical experience as something more extraordinary than the 'everyday' experience as well as the events within the narrative that indicate some kind of formal ritual (White 1995: 65). The realisation of these aspects in performance, although muted, helped to create House of Shadows as a theatrical event.

The first aspect of ceremony is the experience that draws the audience into the theatre and the world of the play from the outside world: it is external to the action of the play but prepares the audience for what is about to happen. This was realised in House of Shadows in the foyer display, which the audience encountered before and after the production. This included: two maps of Port Elizabeth, indicating the setting and allowing audiences, if they wished, to locate places mentioned in the play afterwards; two hung pieces of indigo cloth covered with phrases relating to the theme of the play, which, along with blue candles, also helped to establish the palette of the show; and a series of photographs created in response to the play by Dale Washkansky. The voice-over that welcomed the audience to the performance, in English and Xhosa, as well as the final curtain call, also contributed to this characteristic ceremonial ritual of the theatrical event.

The second aspect of ceremony refers to events that have a ritualistic resonance for the characters in the play. These could be religious, like Angel's funeral in RENT, or secular, like the "AZT break" signalled by the wristwatch alarms in the same show. The appropriation of these rituals into a dramatic context often

downplays their ceremonial quality and this was particularly true of the domestic scenes of House of Shadows. This includes the lighting of the memorial candles, which recalls Judaeo-Christian religious practices and, along with the portraits on the wall, helps create a sense that the Stevens family is strongly influenced by their ancestors. Also, Andrew's presentation of his book to Dorothy becomes what White identifies as the 'ritual of closure' (*ibid.*). This action supports the realisation of the fulfilment attained by Andrew at the end of the play. The performances in the show – the storytelling and dream ballet – inevitably incorporated elements of ceremony into their proceedings. The formal call and response opening of the African story has already been discussed in the section on display above. The dream ballet, structured as a theatrical event within a theatrical event allowed the audience to perform an active role in the performance. Their response was modulated as much by their response to the characters as by the performances of the actors. As mentioned above, this helped drive the play towards its climax in the song, "Andrew".

3.6 Communal Renewal

Communal renewal, as the objective of festive theatre, is the result of two 'rites of passage' journeys: 'the passage of the individual to adulthood through testing' and the passage of 'the community... from one existential state to another through the struggles of the hero' (White 1995: 65). The attainment of the objective relies on the synergy of the book and the score as dramatic texts as well as in performance. I have discussed the integration of the book and score in Chapter Two and in this section I shall focus on the performance of the song, "Andrew", as the means for communal renewal in House of Shadows.

In "Andrew", Andrew contests the ideology of the community as displayed by his mother. The song originally used musical phrases from "Something More",

"Home", "Find the Rainbow", "House of Shadows" and "Ngamany' Amaxhesha" before launching into Andrew's own theme. Because he is an inexperienced musical theatre performer, Potgieter's musical and vocal skills made it necessary to simplify and shorten the song as these could not be developed sufficiently in the rehearsal period. He was still too self-conscious of his singing and this was destructive to his thus far complex characterisation of Andrew. The phrases from "Find the Rainbow" and "Ngamany' Amaxhesha" were removed, the new theme was truncated and the key was lowered so that the number became manageable for him. Although this meant that the aural quality of the piece was diminished, the fact that the musical is a multi-modal form of theatre meant that the visual and kinetic presentation of the number could compensate for the textual compromises. However, when the song was staged, Potgieter's vocal self-consciousness seemed to make him retract completely in his presentation of the song with regards to gesture, movement and presence and he was unable to fill the space in the heightened presentational style of the piece. Ultimately, another compromise had to be made and a trio of back-up singers, already seen within the conventions of the dream ballet, was placed on stage. This allowed Potgieter to complete the number but at a great cost to the production. Because he lacked the ability to take solo control of the space, the song and its presentation – the 'virtuoso performance' required by the musical as festive theatre (White 1995: 64) – the audience could not be convinced that the character was capable of achieving similar control in his life. The number never broke through into new territory; Andrew did not display the vitality that allows him to articulate his emotions in the way that he does in the final lines of the play. As a result, his effect on the ideology of the community – through the artistry of his writing, as a storyteller rather than the subject of a story – was not entirely credible and audience could only access the communal renewal within the play on a limited basis.

3.7 Conclusion

As indicated by White, musical theatre texts appropriate the underlying structures of festive theatre. I am not convinced that all elements of festive theatre are relevant to all musical theatre texts all of the time, but I believe that examining how display, contest, celebration and ceremony are manifest at a dramatic level offers the director some insight into the world of the play. Furthermore, the exploration of how these elements, as well as the concept of communal renewal, are manifest at a theatrical level offer a method of analysing musicals in performance.

Display is important in creating and heightening the dramatic context in which the protagonist must exert his agency either to transform the community or himself. An understanding of contest leads to a greater understanding of how the climax of the play is set up in terms of the parties involved and the issues at stake. Had I pushed for a greater intensity in the outward expression of the contestation in the play, the profundity of the celebration implicit in the closing moments of House of Shadows could have been better appreciated by the audience. Ceremony enriches both the experience of the theatrical event for the audience and enriches the display of the community by revealing some of its traditional rituals.

Finally, the combination of these elements towards communal renewal enriches the philosophical impact of the musical play, which was created as an alternative form to the musical comedy so that audiences could be enlightened as well as entertained. Although I do not believe that White's theory is all inclusive or mutually exclusive, I feel that evaluating musical theatre texts as events of festive theatre offers a fresh, alternative perspective of assessing the conceptual relevance of contemporary musical theatre productions.

CONCLUSION

The creation of House of Shadows allowed me to explore my ideas regarding form in musical theatre in a practical manner. The knowledge I have gained in constructing an integrated book and score will continue to guide my theatre-making processes in the future. Examining the relatively unknown conceptual framework of the musical as festive theatre was extremely rewarding because I could approach the field of musical theatre from a new perspective and uncover new tools for transforming text into performance.

Writing the text was challenging and exciting, and the process of generating a performance text of House of Shadows with my cast, production team and crew was immensely rewarding. Musical theatre is a collaborative art and, in the absence of a co-writer, I need to acknowledge how they enriched the work whether this was in workshop sessions or in more conventional discussions on how to push the work forward. These artists include Sarah Lambert, my assistant director; Gay Morris, my supervisor; Gcina Mhlope, a South African actress, storyteller and writer; Anthea Haupt, the vocal coach; Daniel Galloway, the production manager of the Little Theatre; Ilka Louw and Celeste Pretorius, of the wardrobe at the Little Theatre; Donna McLaggan, my choreographer; Sibongile Balfour, my stage manager and, most particularly, the cast. Although the focus of this explication, as indicated in the title, has been on the issues raised for the theatre-maker by the role of specific structural and conceptual processes in the creation of the text, I need to acknowledge their immense contribution to the production and the process as a whole.

Most importantly, through the writing of this explication House of Shadows, I have been able to articulate my position as a South African theatre-maker in relation

to this particularly American form. I believe this is an important step for the musical if it is to form a part of our South African theatre landscape. Musical theatre is not only about nostalgia and “the way we were”. Original South African musicals offer a great deal of potential in representing not only what we are but what we are becoming.

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APPENDIX A: HOUSE OF SHADOWS PLAYTEXT

House of Shadows was presented by the University of Cape Town at the Arena Theatre, Orange Street, Cape Town from 20 – 27 November 2004, with the following cast:

(In order of appearance)

Maria
Andrew
Dorothy
Neall
Steyn
Swart
Chorus

Kati Francis
Jason Potgieter
Thoko Ntshinga
Ruben Engel
Talia Egelhof
Nathan Fredericks
Graeme Phillips
Kim Kerfoot

Book, Music and Lyrics by David Fick

Additional Material by Sarah Lambert and Jacqui Kowen

Choreography by Donna McLaggan

Directed by David Fick

ACT I

Scene 1

The future: 25 years from now, it is a late August evening in suburban Port Elizabeth – the lower middle avenues of Walmer. An entrance hall, heavy and quiet, has family faces staring from the walls: grandmothers, grandfathers, mothers and fathers. There is a feeling that things in this house have stood in the same place for a long time – the desk and chair in the small office area, the coffee table and chairs in the sitting room, a small cabinet upon which seven unlit candles stand.

On one wall, a portrait of the recently deceased MARIA STEVENS looks over the room. As music plays, MARIA'S son, ANDREW, enters the room. Nearly fifty, HE looks around the house and remembers. Echoes from the past reach ANDREW'S mind. Footsteps walk though the rooms above HIM and the muffled sound of an argument is heard.

MARIA

(Voiceover)

Don't you want something better for your life, son? Something you can be proud of?

ANDREW

(Voiceover)

Just who do you think you are?

MARIA

(Voiceover)

I don't think this is the time, Andrew.

ANDREW

(Voiceover)

No, this is it. You and I are finished.

MARIA

(Voiceover)

Finished? Do you have any idea of the things I've given up for you?

(A door slams shut. The music ends.)

MARIA

It isn't easy to say goodbye, is it?

ANDREW

I didn't think it would be.

MARIA

I did. You should take what you want; it's all yours now anyway.

ANDREW

I have everything I need. Everything, every moment.

MARIA

You don't want anything else?

ANDREW

No. This house used to seem so big. So many rooms, and the garden – I remember running into the garden. Just so I could be free, to get away from all these faces watching me in the dark. Whispering what I should become when I was grown up. Listening to every word I had to say.

MARIA

You were always such a highly-strung child. And so finicky. Your father didn't know what to do with you. Neither did I, I suppose.

ANDREW

That's why you needed Dorothy. Dorothy and her stories and songs. There were so many of them. And me, Justin and Karyn from next door, Dorothy's own son, all of us – we'd all be sitting outside her rooms at the back, hanging on to every word she had to say. I've never forgotten those stories.

MARIA

No, you wouldn't have.

ANDREW

There was one that was my favourite. About the boy who couldn't speak. Sikhuluma.

MARIA

Yes, even I remember that one.

ANDREW

Sikhuluma. "The Boy Who Couldn't Speak".

Scene 2

DOROTHY'S voice pierces the night like the first rays of the dawn. Slowly, light begins to free the shadows that hide within the walls. MARIA fades into the distance as the memory of DOROTHY and her story take over ANDREW'S mind.

SONG: "NGAMANY' AMAXESHA"

DOROTHY

NGAMANY' AMAXESHA
LIBALA INTO' YAZIYO
XA UFUN' INKQUBELA

NGAMANY' AMAXESHA
FUNDA UKUNIKEZELA
UBHABH' UKULULEKE

NGAMANY' AMAXESHA
THEMBELE' ENTWENI
NOKUB' ISEMOYENI
NGOKWENJENJALO
LANDELA
ILIZW' ELITSHA
LILINDILE

(By the end of the song, DOROTHY is centre stage and SHE begins to tell a story.)

Kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi. Once – kudala... dala dala, there lived a husband and wife, who had six sons. Six sons! And when they stood in a row, each one was taller than the next. Now, this woman bore a seventh child – also a boy – and he was named uSikhuluma. Now, uSikhuluma – he could not speak. Even as he grew, when his friends learnt how to talk, he did not find his voice. And because he did not speak with his mouth, he learnt how to speak with his hands. What a clever child! He would point to things when he wanted to show them to his mother or his friends. In this way, he managed to grow up like all the other children in the village.

Now when the woman's husband died, she did not know what to do. One night, she saw a flock of birds flying through the sky, from the left to the right. Then suddenly, a second flock flew past. And another, and another, until seven flocks of birds had flown past the village. Now, the woman thought, "This must be a sign." And she said to her children, "Bantwana bam – sometimes, you have to believe in something that's in the air. Maybe if we follow the flock of birds, then I will know what I must do."

And so the woman and her children started on the road leading away from their village, following the birds that flew in the skies.

(DOROTHY moves into the shadows, as she watches the action of the next scene playing out.)

Scene 3

The immediate past. The sixth day after the death of ANDREW'S father. MARIA

sneaks out of the house, in pantomime as music plays, unaware of DOROTHY, who exists in another plane. MARIA wears a modest dress, a hat and carries a guitar case and bag. SHE makes sure the entrance hall is empty and then looks longingly upstairs at ANDREW'S old bedroom upstairs. SHE takes a last farewell look around the room, and then slowly leaves through the front door.

Scene 4

(The following morning. DOROTHY cleans up the house. The phone rings and DOROTHY answers it.)

DOROTHY

Hello? Detective Steyn? No, no, we haven't heard anything yet. We'll see you soon. Thank you.

(SHE hangs up and goes to light six of the seven candles on the cabinet. Meanwhile, ANDREW – now 24 years old – walks up the drive with a bag over his shoulder and starts knocking on the front door.)

DOROTHY

I'm coming. I'm coming.

(DOROTHY opens the door.)

ANDREW

Dorothy.

(THEY embrace.)

DOROTHY

Why didn't you use your keys?

ANDREW

I forgot. Have you heard anything?

DOROTHY

Nothing.

ANDREW

Do you have any idea where she is? What's happened to her?

(HE takes note of the pictures.)

I mean people don't just disappear.

DOROTHY

Of course they don't. But your mother hasn't been herself since your father died last week.

ANDREW

You don't think she... Did she show any signs of...?

DOROTHY

No, no no. Well, she started talking to herself, to those pictures on the walls. But that's... you know how your mother's like. Sometimes we sit in the kitchen in the mornings and we talk about you growing up and all the things you're doing in Cape Town, but the past week... Well, it's a hard thing for a woman when her man dies.

ANDREW

I just wish we knew what was going on. What time is the police coming over?

DOROTHY

Any time now. Look, there's nothing you can do till they get here. Let me get you a cup of tea and you can try and calm down a bit. Where are the rest of your things?

ANDREW

They're still in the car. Neall's here too. Um, he's just sorting out the car. He's checking the exhaust or something like that. I don't know where he learnt to do things like that.

DOROTHY

I remember when your father tried to teach you about cars.

ANDREW

I just didn't get it. Story of my life, I suppose.

DOROTHY

Don't be silly, Andrew. Well, let me get us all some tea and... well, try not to worry, Andrew. Things will work out in the end.

ANDREW

Thanks.

(DOROTHY exits. ANDREW looks around the room. History. NEALL, who has walked up the driveway, knocks at the front door. ANDREW opens it. NEALL comes inside; he has a suitcase, a bag over his shoulder and a small toolbox.)

NEALL

I see nothing's changed since Friday.

ANDREW

Nothing's changed around here since before I was born. Did you get the car sorted out?

NEALL

Yep. The exhaust is beautiful – perfectly white around the edges. I parked it next to the hearses outside the funeral home next door for now. Hearses? Heese?

ANDREW

Hearses. I think. I'm sorry for dragging you down here.

NEALL

My ange, you didn't drag me anywhere. I want to be here. We'll find your mom and be back home before you know it.

(A small kiss.)

I'll just take our things up to your room. What time do the police get here?

ANDREW

Dorothy said any time now.

(NEALL looks at the portraits.)

NEALL

I can see now – why you found it creepy growing up here. All of them staring over your shoulder your whole life.

ANDREW

Dorothy said my mother started talking to them after my father died. I used to do that too, when I was little. I don't know, I suppose it wasn't too bad. You kind of get used to it.

NEALL

Ha – don't lie. You always complain about them, my ange. Always. Anyway, I don't think I'd ever get used to so many people staring at me all day long.

ANDREW

And yet that's what you do for a living.

NEALL

That's not what I meant. Okay. Upstairs. I'll see you later.

(As the music starts, ANDREW notices that the last candle is unlit, and goes to light it.)

ANDREW

Welcome home.

SONG: "HOME"

NOT SO VERY LONG AGO
WHEN I WAS JUST BOY
I THOUGHT THAT HOME
WOULD ALWAYS BE
WHERE MY HEART WAS

NEALL

Yep. The exhaust is beautiful – perfectly white around the edges. I parked it next to the hearses outside the funeral home next door for now. Hearses? Heese?

ANDREW

Hearses. I think. I'm sorry for dragging you down here.

NEALL

My ange, you didn't drag me anywhere. I want to be here. We'll find your mom and be back home before you know it.

(A small kiss.)

I'll just take our things up to your room. What time do the police get here?

ANDREW

Dorothy said any time now.

(NEALL looks at the portraits.)

NEALL

I can see understand now – why you found it creepy growing up here. All of them staring over your shoulder your whole life.

ANDREW

Dorothy said my mother started talking to them after my father died. I used to do that too, when I was little. I don't know, I suppose it wasn't too bad. You kind of get used to it.

NEALL

Ha – don't lie. You always complain about them, my ange. Always. Anyway, I don't think I'd ever get used to so many people staring at me all day long.

ANDREW

And yet that's what you do for living.

NEALL

That's not what I meant. Okay. Upstairs. I'll see you later.

(As the music starts, ANDREW notices that the last candle is unlit, and goes to light it.)

ANDREW

Welcome home.

SONG: "HOME"

NOT SO VERY LONG AGO
WHEN I WAS JUST BOY
I THOUGHT THAT HOME
WOULD ALWAYS BE
WHERE MY HEART WAS

BUT THINGS ARE VERY DIFFERENT NOW
 MY HEART IS DARK AND COLD
 I'M LOST AND I DON'T KNOW
 WHAT TO BELIEVE IN ANYMORE

COMING HOME
 IS THIS JUST SOMETHING THAT I HAVE TO DO?
 IS THIS HOME?
 CAN THIS OLD PLACE POINT ME TO SOMETHING NEW?
 THIS HOUSE THAT'S IN THE SHADOWS
 OF MY MIND DESERVES A SECOND TRY
 BUT IS IT SOMEWHERE I CAN CALL MY OWN?
 COMING HOME.
 WELCOME HOME.

(NEALL sings from the bedroom upstairs.)

NEALL

THIS HOUSE THAT'S ALWAYS ON YOUR MIND,
 ITS WALLS, I HOPE, WON'T COME BETWEEN US
 IT'S TIME YOU LEFT THIS ALL BEHIND
 I THINK IT'S TIME I KNEW THE SCORE

(Elsewhere, MARIA thinks about her son.)

MARIA

FIND YOUR WAY BACK HOME TO ME
 WHERE MY ARMS CAN SAFELY GUIDE YOU
 TO THE LIFE I DREAMED YOU'D SEE,
 TO A LIFE WORTH SOMETHING MORE

(DOROTHY brings in a tray, singing the next bit of her story.)

DOROTHY

SO THE WOMAN TOOK HER CHILDREN
 AND SHE KEPT THEM IN HER SIGHT
 SIKHULUMA SHE KEPT CLOSEST
 WHEN THEY RESTED EVERY NIGHT

SEE THE BIRDS FLY THROUGH THE SKY NOW
 LET US FOLLOW WHERE THEY GO
 LOOK THE JOURNEY IS BEGINNING
 WHERE THEY'RE GOING WE DON'T KNOW.

(In counterpoint.)

ANDREW
 COMING HOME

NEALL
 THIS HOUSE

DOROTHY
 THE WOMAN

IS THIS JUST SOMETHING THAT I HAVE TO DO?	THAT'S ALWAYS ON YOUR MIND, ITS WALLS, I HOPE, WON'T COME BETWEEN US	TOOK HER CHILDREN AND SHE KEPT THEM IN HER SIGHT SIKHULUMA SHE KEPT CLOSEST WHEN THEY RESTED EVERY NIGHT SEE THE BIRDS FLY THROUGH THE SKY NOW LET US FOLLOW WHERE THEY GO
IS THIS HOME?	IT'S TIME YOU LEFT THIS ALL BEHIND	
CAN THIS OLD PLACE POINT ME TO SOMETHING NEW?	I THINK IT'S TIME I KNEW THE SCORE	
THIS HOUSE THAT'S IN THE SHADOWS OF MY MIND DESERVES A SECOND TRY BUT IS IT SOMEWHERE I CAN CALL MY OWN COMING HOME	MARIA FIND YOUR WAY BACK HOME TO ME WHERE MY ARMS CAN SAFELY GUIDE YOU TO THE LIFE I DREAMED YOU'D SEE	WHERE WILL THEY GO? LOOK THE JOURNEY IS BEGINNING WHERE THEY'RE GOING WE DON'T KNOW.

WELCOME HOME.

ANDREW

WELCOME HOME.

DOROTHY

WELCOME HOME.

NEALL

WELCOME HOME.

MARIA

WELCOME HOME.
WELCOME HOME.

ALL

(Music plays as THEY return to their activities. The two police officers walk up the driveway. DETECTIVE STEYN is in plain clothes; OFFICER SWART is in uniform and carries a book. They knock on the door. DOROTHY answers.)

DOROTHY

Detective Steyn.

STEYN

Ah, Dorothy. Has Mr Stevens arrived yet?

DOROTHY

He has. Please come inside.

STEYN

Thank you.

SWART

(Squeezing past)

Sorry. Good morning. Uh, thank you. Sorry.

STEYN

Mr Stevens – Detective Steyn. I haven't seen you in years. Ja, you really do look just like your father. I was sorry to hear about his passing; he was always good to us at the station.

SWART

Yes, I would like to offer my expressmost condolences.

STEYN

This is my trainee officer, Swart. He's in our programme for derelict delinquents

SWART

Don't call me those nasty names.

STEYN

Swart –

SWART

And, Mr Stevens, I hope you don't mind but when your book was published I bought one for myself. Now I know it's for children but I liked it and I thought well here's someone from Port Elizabeth who's doing well for himself in the big wide world so I bought it. And I brought it with me today in the hope that you will sign it with your autograph.

(SWART produces a book, which HE hands to ANDREW.)

STEYN

Swart!

ANDREW

No, it's all right. Thank you. You already know Dorothy and this is my partner, Neall Adams.

STEYN

Good to meet you.

SWART

Haai, I used to watch you on "Sewende Laan". You know, you were one of my favourites. You mos caused all that trouble with Dezi and Connie and Alice. I never would have thought that you were a moffie.

STEYN

Hey – Swart, I'm warning you for the last time.

SWART

Oh, I'm sorry I didn't mean to be so disproportionate.

ANDREW

Really, it's fine. It's all right.

(HE hand back the book.)

Now, have you managed to find out anything about my mother's disappearance? She isn't answering her cell phone.

(HE looks to DOROTHY for confirmation.)

DOROTHY

No, we still haven't heard from her yet.

STEYN

Well, sir, there were no threats or letters or anything of that kind, so we quickly did a little bit of detective work.

(SWART unpacks his detective kit onto the floor.)

SWART

Not strictly above the boards, but it does the job.

ANDREW

And?

STEYN

Well, we put her number into our stolen cellphone records and then tracked her phone through her sim card signal. Which led us to believe that she was somewhere on the Garden Route.

NEALL

That's a rather wide area.

STEYN

Yes, that is a rather wide area. But we managed to trace the signal. And Swart made a few calls to hotels and check the registers and things and it seems that she's booked herself into Caboose in Knysna –

SWART

Nice, ne?

STEYN

– so it seems, gentlemen, she's on her own reconnaissance and there's not much we can do about that. But we have got the phone number of the hotel and if you would care to call, perhaps you can convince her to return home. Then the problem is no longer under our jurisdiction.

SWART

Because we are the police and I think you will need some sort of social worker.
(Everyone looks at him.)

Well, I started an undergraduate degree in social work. My mommie always used to say I have the gift for listening to people.

STEYN

Ja, the problem only start when you open up your mouth.

ANDREW

So what do I have to do?

STEYN

Well, we will give you the number.
(To SWART)

Gee die man die nommer. And we can do is give you some of the guidelines we give to people when we negotiate things like runaways and hostages and things like that. But as I said, this really isn't our area of expertise.

(A moment as they ALL stare at each other.)

NEALL

So what now?

STEYN

When you're ready, just dial the number and ask for a connection to carriage eight and then, when Mrs Stevens answers the phone, talk to her in an ordinary tone of voice.

ANDREW

Is that all?

STEYN

Yes, sir.

ANDREW

I just dial the number.

SWART

And speak in an ordinary tone of voice. Like you're a normal person.

ANDREW

All right.

(HE goes to the phone and dials the number.)

SWART

Is it ringing?

ANDREW

Yes. Um, hello. Can you put me through to Carriage Eight, please. Thank you.

SWART

Is it ringing? You forgot to tell him to put it on speakerphone. Put it on speakerphone.

(ANDREW does this. After a couple of rings, MARIA answers.)

MARIA

(Voiceover)

Hello.

ANDREW

It's her.

Scene 5

(MARIA'S voice awakens another part of ANDREW'S mind. As music plays, DOROTHY moves to the foreground as SHE continues her story.)

DOROTHY

The woman and her children followed the birds for many days. One evening, they saw a homestead glimmering in the dusk. Although it was dark, they could see the fire burning there and the smoke danced with the shadows of the night as it curled its way into the skies. The mother said to her children, "Bantwana barn, let's go over there to that house over there. We have been travelling for many days and I'm tired of sleeping on the ground in the cold."

It was at this moment that Sikhuluma spoke for the first time, "Mama, do not take us there. Something is waiting for us in that house. If we go there, we will all die."

Yo! When she heard his voice, the woman felt as if a great burden was lifted off her shoulders: "Yo! At last, he has spoken. We have done well on this journey, to finally hear him speak."

But the brothers were troubled by what he had said. "What if his words are true? We do not want to die! Perhaps we should turn away from this path."

Their woman was shocked and angry. "Hayi suga! He knows nothing! This is, after all, the first time he's spoken. Now, suddenly, you think he's a grown person, an old man! Hayi suga! He's only beginning to speak! Bantwana bam, there will be water and food for us, and a place to sleep by the fire." And she started off toward the homestead and the brothers followed behind. But Sikhuluma was silent; he did not speak again.

Scene 6

(MARIA'S voice catapults us back into reality.)

MARIA

I don't expect you to understand, Andrew. But I can't be there now. I need some space. It's your turn to hold the fort, so for once in your life, my love, grow a pair of balls and do something worthwhile.

ANDREW

But, mom –

MARIA

Goodbye, Andrew.

(SHE hangs up.)

STEYN

Well, that wasn't much help at all.

SWART

It wasn't pretty.

STEYN

Look, I thought we explained this clearly.

SWART

Detective Steyn told you exactly how to handle the call.

ANDREW

Look, you don't get to come into this house and tell me what to do.

STEYN

We're not trying to tell you what to do, Mr Stevens. All we are saying is that we are doing this as a favour. This is not a priority case. Mrs Stevens is clearly on her own reconnaissance. The only reason we're going to all this trouble is because Councillor Stevens –

DETECTIVES

– God rest his soul –

STEYN

– was so good to us at the station when he was alive.

ANDREW

Well, he isn't alive anymore and –

DOROTHY

Andrew, I think that's enough. Detective Steyn, thank you for your time. You, too, Officer Swart. But I think you'd better be going. We'll let you know if we hear anything new.

SWART

Thank you.

STEYN

Yes, we hope you manage to sort things out.

(SHE shows the police out and closes the door.)

ANDREW

I can't believe it! I just can't believe it.

DOROTHY

Andrew, I know this probably isn't what you expected to hear, but Detective Steyn was just trying to help

ANDREW

My whole life is in Cape Town. And it's all come to a complete standstill.

DOROTHY

And as for your mother –

ANDREW

It's like I'm ten years old again.

DOROTHY

– the truth is, no matter how much you'd like to avoid it, she's got the right to make her own choices, even if those choices affect you.

ANDREW

Really? Because I don't think so.

DOROTHY

You didn't have to come back.

ANDREW

Didn't I? She knew I'd be worried. And now what? Somebody has to sort everything out? There's a ton of stuff to work out here. The payment for all of my father's funeral things. The house. The business. Look at this – bookings for the whole week, and the week after.

DOROTHY

I understand. But just give it a little time.

ANDREW

I don't have time.

NEALL

But you've got to do what you got to do. And you know I'll stay for as long as I can but I've got rehearsals for that corporate the week from next Monday.

ANDREW

I'm sure things will be back to normal by then. Look, I'm sorry, I know that coming back here twice isn't what we had planned for the vac but –

NEALL

It's all right.

ANDREW

No it's not.

NEALL

Well, maybe. But there's nothing much we can do, is there.

ANDREW

School starts again on Monday.

NEALL

It'll be fine. Just ask for some compassionate leave; they'll understand.

ANDREW

I don't know about that. I haven't really been at the school long enough. There's no way they'll let me off. They're going to think I'm taking a few extra days holiday or something.

NEALL

No, they won't. Just sort it out now though.

ANDREW

I don't even know how long to ask for.

NEALL

Just do it, Andrew. I know what you're like when it comes to making phone calls – if you put it off you'll talk yourself out of it and that's not an option for now.

(NEALL gives ANDREW his cell.)

ANDREW

Fine.

(HE dials the number on the cell.)

Hello, Michelle? It's Andrew Stevens speaking. Can you put me through to Lynette, please? I need to organise a few extra days leave. No, I'm fine. It's my mother.

NEALL

These pictures.... Andrew's always going on about how he used to talk to them – how they made him feel.

DOROTHY

She did the same thing – his mother, ever since his father died. About all sorts of things – herself, about how she's alone now, about all the things Andrew's done since he moved on to Cape Town. She's been different, cold, like I've never seen her before.

NEALL

He's never made her out to be a warm person; I certainly didn't think so, when I was here for the funeral.

DOROTHY

Well, you were the first.... Andrew's never brought anyone home before. And to bring you here for the funeral... I don't know if it was the right time. It's very complicated. But I've known her for a long time now. She hides a lot away.

ANDREW

I can't; I'm in P.E. / I understand but there's nothing I can do about it. / Thanks. I'll get back to you as soon as I can. Bye. Well, that's one thing sorted out at least.

NEALL

That's it, ange - one step at a time.

DOROTHY

Well, you two should finish unpacking. The orders aren't going to take care of themselves.

ANDREW

All right. When does the first delivery need to go out?

DOROTHY

Two o'clock. Things will work out in the end.

ANDREW

Thanks.

Scene 7

(The house dissolves into the shadows and DOROTHY relates the next piece of "The Boy Who Could Not Speak".)

DOROTHY

The family walked down the road towards the homestead. The mother kept Sikhuluma at her side and the brothers followed behind. They had not been walking long when suddenly, one of the boys died. He just fell down dead on the road. The family looked at each other, but they did not speak. A short time later, another died. They left him there and journeyed on. The brothers seemed to understand that they would all die and it was not long before another boy died. Three of the boys were now dead.

The woman was getting nervous. She seemed to understand that – well – her turn would also come. She would also die, because it was clear that any person who stepped on this road would die, no matter who that person was. They moved forward and, soon, the fourth boy died, and the fifth boy died a short time later. They pushed on, leaving them behind on the road.

They were not far from the house when the sixth boy died. Only the two of them remained now, Sikhuluma and his mother. They walked sorrowfully – the rest of their family had died, but they journeyed on.

(DOROTHY blows out the candles and exits.)

Scene 8

(Memory. ANDREW sits in the office, working with a manuscript.)

MARIA

Andrew?

ANDREW

Yes, mom?

MARIA

Here you are. What are you doing down so early, son?

ANDREW

I was just going over a few things.

MARIA

I thought you finished that last night.

ANDREW

Well, I changed it a bit. Look.

(MARIA pages through the manuscript.)

ANDREW

Maybe someone will pick it up now.

MARIA

You should be more positive. It's wonderful.

ANDREW

You're just saying that. All right, if you don't need me, I'm going to jump in the shower and get going.

MARIA

Where are you off to?

ANDREW

To see Neall.

MARIA

Can't you wait till you've had your breakfast?

ANDREW

We're going out for breakfast at the Boardwalk.

MARIA

Seems like there's no one else but him now.

ANDREW

Well, I really like him. Anyway, he's doing a corporate up at Sun City at the end of the month, so I won't see much of him after next week.

MARIA

What do you do?

ANDREW

I don't know. We talk.

MARIA

Is there no one else to talk to?

ANDREW

Not about the things we talk about.

MARIA

What things?

ANDREW

Philosophy. Things. You don't care about Jung or Cocteau or –

MARIA

You don't know that.

ANDREW

It's different with him. We're both young and...

MARIA

And I'm old.

ANDREW

Why don't you like him?

MARIA

Oh I've tried, Andrew. I think he wants to shut me out. With him I feel like he wants all of you –

ANDREW

To see Neall.

MARIA

Can't you wait till you've had your breakfast?

ANDREW

We're going out for breakfast at the Boardwalk.

MARIA

Seems like there's no one else but him now.

ANDREW

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MARIA

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Philosophy. Things. You don't care about Jung or Cocteau or –

MARIA

You don't know that.

ANDREW

It's different with him. We're both young and...

MARIA

And I'm old.

ANDREW

Why don't you like him?

MARIA

Oh I've tried, Andrew. I think he wants to shut me out. With him I feel like he wants all of you –

ANDREW

Well, what, did you expect me to stay single for the rest of my life? Settle for some twin bedded friendship?

MARIA

– all of you, all of the time, and to leave nothing for anyone else. Nothing for you. Don't you want something better for you life, son? Something that you can be proud of?

SONG: "SOMETHING MORE"

WHEN YOU WALKED OUT THROUGH THAT DOOR
I KNEW SOMEDAY YOU'D BE BACK
WHEN YOUR LIFE WENT OFF THE TRACK
BECAUSE OF ALL THE THINGS YOU LACK
NOW DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT
DON'T GET YOUR NOSE ALL OUT OF JOINT
BECAUSE YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT THE POINT
AND I DON'T WANT TO PICK A FIGHT

BUT REALLY ANDREW, ANDREW
IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON UP AND TIME
TO LIVE A LIFE WORTH SOMETHING MORE
TO FIND A DREAM WORTH DYING FOR
TO FIND A KEY THAT OPENS UP THE DOORWAY
TO A NEW DIMENSION
OPEN UP YOUR EYES AND SEE
EVERYTHING THAT YOU COULD BE
NOW YOUR FATHER'S GONE
IT'S TIME FOR YOU
TO LIVE A LIFE WORTH
SOMETHING MORE

NOW I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE GAY
AND I DON'T CARE WHO YOU SCREW
WELL, ALL RIGHT, MAYBE I DO
BUT THEN YOU KNOW THAT'S NOTHING NEW
DON'T YOU WANT A BETTER LIFE?
FOR A LIFE YOU NEED A PLAN
SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST A MAN
WHO WILL WALK OUT AND LEAVE YOU DRY

SO REALLY ANDREW, ANDREW
IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON UP AND TIME
TO LIVE A LIFE WORTH SOMETHING MORE
TO FIND A DREAM WORTH DYING FOR
TO FIND A KEY THAT OPENS UP THE DOORWAY
TO A NEW DIMENSION
OPEN UP YOUR EYES AND SEE
EVERYTHING THAT YOU COULD BE
NOW YOUR FATHER'S GONE

IT'S TIME FOR YOU
TO LIVE A LIFE WORTH
SOMETHING MORE

YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE ADVICE
I'M NOT ONE TO QUESTION WHY
LET YOUR CHANCES PASS YOU BY
IT'S CLEAR THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO TRY
DON'T COME RUNNING TO MY DOOR
WHEN YOUR WHOLE LIFE FALLS APART
AND YOU NEED A BRAND NEW START
BECAUSE YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN NOW

NOW REALLY ANDREW, ANDREW
IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON UP AND TIME
TO LIVE A LIFE WORTH SOMETHING MORE
TO FIND A DREAM WORTH DYING FOR
TO FIND A KEY THAT OPENS UP THE DOORWAY
TO A NEW DIMENSION
OPEN UP YOUR EYES AND SEE
EVERYTHING THAT YOU COULD BE
NOW YOUR FATHER'S GONE
IT'S TIME FOR YOU
TO LIVE A LIFE WORTH
SOMETHING MORE

Scene 9

(It is some time after MARIA'S disappearance. ANDREW is writing, furious and frustrated, in the office. NEALL wakes up in bed alone. HIS phone rings and HE answers. ANDREW goes up to the bedroom.)

NEALL

Hi. / No, I was just still sleeping actually. What time is it? / Eleven? / Ja, it's like every day's a Sunday here. What's up? / Cancelled? Ok. / Well, I guess you can't have them all. Well, thanks. / I don't know; I would have come back tomorrow but if there's no corporate, then I'm not sure. / I'll let you know. / Bye.

(To ANDREW)

Where have you been?

ANDREW

Nowhere. Writing.

NEALL

You didn't sleep again last night did you?

ANDREW

I had a dream. Well, maybe not a dream because I wasn't sleeping. A vision. Of this house, with all these windows, lit up like little buttons. I could see it from the outside, but I was also stuck on the inside. With all these ghosts, these spirits. And they wouldn't let me go. I knew I had to do something, for each them, to finish off their lives. To complete something they hadn't. And once I'd done that, I knew that I'd be free. And the last two ghosts were my father and my mother. And I knew what they wanted, but it wasn't what I wanted. I wanted to hide in the shadows of the house but I couldn't I had to face them. To face her. And I started sweating. My heart was beating so fast I could hear it. And I had to write down the dream before it went away.

NEALL

You haven't heard from her yet, have you?

ANDREW

No.

NEALL

How much longer are you going to wait, Andrew?

ANDREW

What do you mean?

NEALL

I mean it's been too long. Maybe it is time for you to face her. Call her. Leave a message if she won't answer the phone. All this, it isn't your responsibility. It's her business and if the house falls to pieces while she's not here, that's her problem. Not yours.

ANDREW

But Neall –

NEALL

But nothing, Andrew. Life goes on. Your mother's had some time to... to do what she needs to do. But life goes on. She has to realise that, so do you.

ANDREW

I do.

NEALL

Then why are you still here? This is the house in your dream, Andy. You need to get out before it swallows you up.

ANDREW

Don't be so melodramatic. It's not that bad.

NEALL

I thought you hated it here.

ANDREW

That's the thing. I remember hating Port Elizabeth when I was in Cape Town. I remember thinking that people here were really nasty, narrow-minded. But I've been remembering all kinds of good things since I got home –

NEALL

This isn't home, Andrew.

ANDREW

I mean, here –

NEALL

Home is someplace you feel comfortable in. Somewhere you can relax and feel, well, at home. You're out of control here. You've hardly been sleeping. You wonder around waiting for something to happen.

ANDREW

Well, what do you expect me to do?

NEALL

You walk around Cape Town like you own the place, but here it's like you apologise for walking to the shop on the corner. Like you're six years old and you know that you're going to be in trouble if you cross the road.

ANDREW

You don't understand –

NEALL

I do understand. That there's so much here that's made you who you are. But this isn't you. It's a part of you, just like your arms or your legs, or the way you were brought up – but this isn't who you are anymore –

ANDREW

What are you trying say?

NEALL

And I'll tell you something else – this isn't who I am either. Not by a long shot. I can't stay here forever. I don't want to stay here forever.

ANDREW

So why don't you just leave? You've got that corporate anyway.

NEALL

The corporate been cancelled.

ANDREW

Oh.

NEALL

But I can't stay here any more. I just can't. I've had enough. You can stay if you like but I'm leaving tonight.

ANDREW

Well, nobody's forcing you to stay. You can't manipulate me into following you back to Cape Town just because it suits you.

NEALL

I don't want you to follow me around.

ANDREW

Whatever.

NEALL

So what now.

ANDREW

I don't know.

NEALL

Maybe I should just get packed.

ANDREW

Fine.

(ANDREW goes into the hall. NEALL stays upstairs and starts packing; uses a phone to call a taxi.)

SONG: "I GUESS THIS IS GOODBYE"

ANDREW

I GUESS THIS IS GOODBYE.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO YOU.
SO MAYBE THERE'S NOTHING TO SAY
OR MAYBE I KNOW
THE WORDS IN MY MIND
ARE A DREAM I HAVE TO LEAVE BEHIND.
AND SO I GUESS THIS IS GOODBYE.

NEALL

I'LL ALWAYS WONDER WHY
YOU WEREN'T A DREAM I COULD PURSUE
WHEN SOMETIMES YOU CAN'T FIND A WAY
THEN SOMETIMES YOU KNOW
THE WORDS IN YOUR MIND
LEAVE YOU ON YOUR OWN, RESIGNED.
AND SO I GUESS THIS IS GOODBYE.

BOTH

SO NOW I FIND
THE WORLD IS FULL OF MOVING SHADOWS
I'M BLOWING WHERE THE WIND BLOWS
AND WAITING FOR MY TURN.

THE DAYS WILL PASS ME BY
MUCH LONGER THAN I EVER KNEW

ANDREW

IF ONLY I ASKED YOU TO STAY
IF ONLY YOU'D KNOWN
THOSE WORDS IN MY MIND
AND THE DREAM YOU CHOSE TO LEAVE BEHIND.
I GUESS THIS WOULDN'T BE GOODBYE.
AND YET,

BOTH

I KNOW THIS IS GOODBYE.

(NEALL comes to the top of the stairs. THEIR eyes meet.
ANDREW leaves through the back door. NEALL comes
downstairs. DOROTHY enters from the kitchen.)

DOROTHY

You're leaving? What happened?

NEALL

It's time. He's ... Never mind

DOROTHY

I'm sorry, Neall.

NEALL

I know. I should have expected this. I don't why I put up with it for so long.

(Pause.)

Why the silence? No one's dead. It's classic Andrew. He's gone off to brood over his problems, his journey, and someone else has to deal with the fallout.

DOROTHY

It's not that simple.

NEALL

Then why are you the one that's here to say goodbye? Where's he?

DOROTHY

I can't answer that.

NEALL

He's forced me into a corner and I don't know what to do. But –

DOROTHY

You still love him.

NEALL

I do. But I've never really known whether he cared about me.

He does. **DOROTHY**

Then why doesn't he say so? **NEALL**

He just hasn't found the words yet. **DOROTHY**

(A hooter sounds.)

That's for me. **NEALL**

You must take care of yourself in Cape Town. **DOROTHY**

I will. Thanks for everything. Tell him I said goodbye. **NEALL**

(NEALL walks out of the door. HE takes one last look at the house. ANDREW comes back in.)

You're weren't gone for long. **DOROTHY**

Has he left? **ANDREW**

You should have been here to say goodbye. **DOROTHY**

I couldn't. **ANDREW**

What's the matter, Andrew? **DOROTHY**

Nothing. I don't know. He doesn't understand. I keep hearing things. Seeing things. **ANDREW**

You just need to get some sleep. **DOROTHY**

I can't. I've tried. But I just can't **ANDREW**

You can't go on like this. It isn't good for you. You'll wear yourself out. **DOROTHY**

ANDREW

I'm already worn out.

DOROTHY

So go to sleep.

ANDREW

I can't. You know, it was cruel of her to do this to me now. It was bad enough coming to bury him. But to get me back here where they can see me. Where he can see me. He didn't know me. I wanted him to know me, but he wouldn't understand. He couldn't understand. Maybe I should have tried harder.

DOROTHY

You can't think like that, Andrew. He knew you. But he's the same as you; he just didn't know how to say so at the right time. Can't you see that? Can't you feel it? You were such a clever child. You still are. But you can't just live inside your head like this, and leave your heart empty.

SONG: "LIGHT A CANDLE"

LIGHT A CANDLE, SAY A PRAYER
COULD YOU BRING HIM BACK? NEVER.

ASK A QUESTION; MAKE A SIGN.
DOES IT MATTER NOW – HE'S GONE FOREVER.

LOOKING INSIDE, REACHING OUT
AS YOU WONDER WHAT LIFE'S ALL ABOUT

IT'S NOT CANDLES OR QUESTIONS OR PRAYER
WHEN THE PATH THAT YOU LOOK FOR IS THERE
IN YOUR HEART NOW,
WAITING TO BE FOUND.

DOROTHY

Forget what you know. Live with your heart for a bit. Your mind will follow.

ANDREW

I don't know if there's anything left inside. I'm running on empty, Dorothy. And I'm the only one who knows. There's nothing left inside me. Like the wilderness, the emptiness of the sky in the Karoo. I don't have anywhere to call home. But if I don't find shelter soon, if this emptiness isn't filled, it's going to suck me in and kill me.

DOROTHY

But home is something you make for yourself. And if you think that home is the place you go to be loved, then you're very lucky, Andrew. You aren't alone. You don't need to feel so lonely. People think that they shape their own destinies. But your destiny, your journey is shaped by so much more than just you. You are everyone that has gone before you and everyone that follows will carry you with them. Like shadows that trail behind you when the sun burns in the sky, we follow the patterns laid out by those who have gone before us. People sing the songs they were taught by their

grandmothers, that their grandmothers taught them. And until we remember that we can write our own songs, we walk along the same path. Never changing. Never completely discovering who we are.

SONG: "FIND THE RAINBOW"

WHEN YOU SAY GOODBYE AND IT'S TIME TO LEAVE
THE THINGS YOU'VE LOVED AND MADE YOUR OWN
THERE'S A CHILD INSIDE
THERE'S NO NEED TO LOSE
THE FREEDOM YOU HAVE KNOWN

RAIN MAY FALL
BUT WHILE YOU'RE WAITING FOR THE SUN TO SHINE
FIND THE RAINBOW DEEP WITHIN YOU
AND THE DAYS WILL TURN OUT FINE

THOUGH YOU WALK ALONE, DON'T FORGET THE THINGS
YOUR HEART HAS FOUND ALONG THE WAY
THERE'S A VOICE WITHIN
AND IT'S TELLING YOU
TO DO THE THINGS YOU SAY

CLOUDS ROLL BY
IT MIGHT JUST BE THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM
FIND THE RAINBOW DEEP WITHIN YOU
THERE'S A PLACE THAT'S SAFE AND WARM

FOR ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN WHEN EVERY MOMENT COUNTS
THOUGH THE CHOICES ARE DIFFICULT TO SEE
YOU'LL FIND THE HAPPY ENDING
YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR SO LONG
AND YOU'LL FIND THE PLACE YOU'RE MEANT TO BE

IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD
ARE THE THINGS YOU'VE DREAMED
AND EVERYTHING YOU HOPED WOULD BE
THERE'S A WAY TO GO
GOT A ROAD TO FOLLOW
ONE YOU DID NOT SEE

WINDS MIGHT BLOW
SO WHILE YOU'RE WAITING FOR THE SUN TO SHINE
FIND THE RAINBOW DEEP WITHIN YOU
EVERYTHING WILL TURN OUT FINE

(DOROTHY sends ANDREW upstairs to bed.)

FOR ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN WHEN EVERY MOMENT COUNTS
THOUGH THE CHOICES ARE DIFFICULT TO SEE
YOU'LL FIND THE HAPPY ENDING

YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR SO LONG
AND YOU'LL FIND THE PLACE YOU'RE MEANT TO BE

IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD
ARE THE THINGS YOU DREAMED
AND EVERYTHING YOU HOPED WOULD BE
THERE'S A WAY TO GO
GOT A ROAD TO FOLLOW
ONE YOU DID NOT SEE

RAIN MAY FALL
SO WHILE YOU'RE WAITING FOR THE SUN TO SHINE
FIND THE RAINBOW DEEP WITHIN YOU
EVERYTHING WILL TURN OUT FINE

(Blackout.)

Scene 10

(Silence. For a few moments, it seems as if ANDREW might sleep peacefully. But as music starts, he dreams and becomes restless. As in the prologue, the memories of the past are stirred. ANDREW wakes up suddenly. The sound of a heartbeat underscores a telephone call – DOROTHY and MARIA V/O – as the house is transformed into the HOUSE OF SHADOWS. As DOROTHY and MARIA talk about HIM, ANDREW goes downstairs and looks around, before running out of the door in his pyjamas.)

MARIA

Hello?

DOROTHY

You have to come back. It's time.

MARIA

I'm not ready.

DOROTHY

If you don't – This isn't good for him.

MARIA

You can't tell me what's good for my son.

DOROTHY

You can't keep him in chains for the rest of his life.

MARIA

Don't talk to me about the way I look after my son.

DOROTHY

He needs to find a life of his own.

MARIA

He doesn't know what he needs.

DOROTHY

He's never had the chance to find out.

MARIA

What do you mean by that?

DOROTHY

This isn't a game anymore. A man can throw many things off his back when he grows up. But a mother who holds on to him –

MARIA

What?

DOROTHY

– who holds onto him and won't let go –

MARIA

Don't try and fix the blame on me.

DOROTHY

– don't do that to Andrew. That's enough to ruin his life.

Scene 11

(The House of Shadows: a space inside ANDREW'S mind where his thoughts, emotions and perceptions of the people and the world around him and the way in which they affect his identity fuse into a series of presentational routines. DOROTHY, now transformed into an Makeba-like diva, is in control as ANDREW'S thoughts materialise before him. ANDREW arrives and is welcomed by DOROTHY and the other performers.)

SONG: "HOUSE OF SHADOWS"

DOROTHY

IN THE NIGHT WHEN THE WORLD IS FULL OF SHADOWS
AND IT SEEMS LIKE THE LIGHT OF THE SUN WILL NEVER RETURN
THERE'S A PLACE DEEP WITHIN YOUR DARKEST SHADOWS

IN YOUR HEART WHERE THE BLINDING RAYS OF HOPE
WILL ALWAYS BURN

ALL (EXCEPT ANDREW)

WELCOME TO THE HOUSE OF SHADOWS
WHERE THE SHADES OF THE PAST
BECOME TOMORROW'S GUIDING LIGHT
WHERE THE DAWN OF THE FUTURE
INTERRUPTS THE DARKEST NIGHT
LIKE A BLAZE OF GLORY THROUGH THE STARS

WHEN YOU'RE IN THE HOUSE OF SHADOWS
YOU'LL REMEMBER WHERE YOU'RE FROM
AND ALL THE THINGS YOU'VE EVER SEEN
THOUGH YESTERDAY MAY GUIDE YOU
DON'T FORGET THAT'S WHERE YOU'VE BEEN
AND TODAY A BRAND NEW JOURNEY MUST BEGIN

THE OTHER HALF OF SHADOW IS A NEVER-FAILING LIGHT
KEEP IT BURNING IN YOUR SOUL
LET IT SHINE THROUGH
THE HOUSE OF SHADOWS WELCOMES YOU IN FROM THE NIGHT
COME AND JOIN US
WE'LL BE WAITING THERE FOR YOU

(DOROTHY moves to her place, watching everything from her
place of power. NEALL and a group of BACKING VOCALISTS
enter to perform his act.)

SONG: "THE ONE I'LL ALWAYS CARRY IN MY HEART"

NEALL

WHEN THE WORLD IS CLOSING 'ROUND YOU
AND THE LIGHTS ARE BURNING LOW
WHEN THE ROAD IS LONG BEFORE YOU
AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO GO
WHEN THE GAMES ARE FIN'LLY OVER
AND YOUR LIFE IS DULL AGAIN
IF YOU FEEL ALONE OR LONELY
YOU CAN TURN TO ME AND THEN

WITH CHORUS

I KNOW YOU'LL FIND THE WAY
WITH MY HAND TO HOLD AND GUIDE YOU
I AM HERE TO STAY
AND MY LOVE CAN SEE US THROUGH
JUST REMEMBER WE'RE TOGETHER
THOUGH WE MIGHT BE MILES APART
YOU'RE THE ONE I'LL ALWAYS CARRY IN MY HEART

NEALL

I'LL BE WAITING FOR THAT MOMENT
 WHEN THE TWO OF US WILL MEET
 AFTER TRIALS, AND PAIN AND TORMENT
 WHEN THE JOURNEY IS COMPLETE
 YOU'LL BE STANDING THERE BEFORE ME
 IN YOUR EYES THERE'S SOMETHING NEW
 KNOWING ALL THE THINGS WE COULD BE
 HAVE A CHANCE OF COMING TRUE

WITH CHORUS

I KNOW YOU'LL FIND THE WAY
 WITH MY HAND TO HOLD AND GUIDE YOU
 I AM HERE TO STAY
 AND MY LOVE WILL SEE US THROUGH
 FOR I KNOW WE'LL BE TOGETHER
 THOUGH WE MIGHT BE MILES APART
 YOU'RE THE ONE I'LL ALWAYS CARRY IN MY HEART

NEALL

AND I DON'T CARE WHO'S AROUND US
 'CAUSE TIME JUST STANDS STILL
 WHEN YOU'RE KISSING ME AND HOLDING ME
 DON'T LET IT END UNTIL

WITH CHORUS

I KNOW I'VE FOUND THE WAY
 WITH YOUR HAND TO HOLD AND GUIDE ME
 YOU ARE HERE TO STAY
 AND YOUR LOVE CAN SET ME FREE
 AND I KNOW WE'LL BE TOGETHER
 EVEN THOUGH WE'RE WORLDS APART
 YOU'RE THE ONE I'LL ALWAYS CARRY IN MY HEART
 YOU'RE THE ONE I'LL ALWAYS CARRY IN MY HEART

(NEALL exits and STEYN and SWART enter, ready for their act. SWART really plays up to the audience.)

STEYN

Well, I suppose it's time for us to do a bit of a song and a dance. Hey? Hey!

(No response. SHE sees SWART playing up to the audience. She slaps him across the top of the head.)

STEYN

Wake up!

SWART

Eina!

STEYN

Stop being such a fool.

Sorry.

SWART

Now I was saying I think it's time for us to do a bit of a song and a dance.

STEYN

Is it? I don't know; I'd rather tell a joke.

SWART

A joke?

STEYN

Yes.

SWART

You want to tell a joke?

STEYN

Yes.

SWART

And where will you get this alleged joke from?

STEYN

I have a joke.

SWART

You have a joke?

STEYN

Yes. I wrote it myself.

SWART

Where did you get it?

STEYN

I made it up!

SWART

No you didn't.

STEYN

Yes, I did.

SWART

No you didn't.

STEYN

Yes, I did. It's about your forefathers.

SWART

STEYN

I don't have four fathers!

SWART

We all have forefathers. All of these people here have forefathers.

STEYN

Well, they should be ashamed of themselves.

SWART

Every single one of us has forefathers. But only one that comes home at night.

STEYN

Well?

SWART

Well, what?

STEYN

Where's the joke?

SWART

That was the joke.

STEYN

That was the joke?

SWART

Yes.

STEYN

Man, you the blêddie joke. Come now, stop wasting the people's time – it's time to sing.

SONG: "A BETTER MAN"

WHEN I WAS JUST A LITTLE GIRL OF THREE OR FOUR
MY DADDY WAS THE ONLY MAN THAT I COULD ADORE
BUT, DADDY, I'M A BIG GIRL NOW
I NEED SOMETHING NEW
DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS BUT I KNOW IT'S NOT YOU

SO LITTLE TIME AND SO MANY MEN

SWART

I'VE DONE MY BEST

STEYN

YOU BETTER TRY AGAIN

SWART

SO TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO
AND I'LL TRY TO MAKE MYSELF
A BETTER MAN FOR YOU

STEYN

I OUGHT TO GET A MUSCLE MAN WITH GREAT BIG PECS
WHO'LL SHOW ME ALL THE GOOD TIMES AND A LOTTA GOOD SEX
BUT TAKING CARE OF MAMA
NEEDS A BRAIN CELL OR TWO
GO BACK TO THE GYM WHERE YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO

SO LITTLE TIME AND SO MANY MEN

SWART

I'VE DONE MY BEST

STEYN

YOU BETTER TRY AGAIN

SWART

SO TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO
AND I'LL TRY TO MAKE MYSELF
A BETTER MAN FOR YOU

STEYN

A MAN WHO IS CREATIVE IS A MAN I'D USE
AND EVERY SINGLE ARTIST IN THE WORLD NEEDS A MUSE
BUT ARTISTS ARE SO TORTURED
AND THEY MAKE ME DEPRESSED
SO GIVE ME A MAN WHO IS MORE SELF-POSSESSED

SO LITTLE TIME AND SO MANY MEN

SWART

I'VE DONE MY BEST

STEYN

YOU BETTER TRY AGAIN

SWART

SO TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO
AND I'LL TRY TO MAKE MYSELF
A BETTER MAN FOR YOU

STEYN

I WENT BACK TO THE DICTIONARY TO LOOK UP "MAN"
IT SEEMS THAT MASCULINITY IS JUST SOME SCAM

SO SORRY MR OXFORD
WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT
YOUR CLASSIFICATION IS QUITE INCORRECT

SO LITTLE TIME AND SO MANY MEN

SWART

I'VE DONE MY BEST

STEYN

YOU BETTER TRY AGAIN

SWART

SO TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO
AND I'LL TRY TO MAKE MYSELF
A BETTER MAN FOR YOU

(STEYN and SWART exit and MARIA enters.)

SONG: "BABY BOY BLUE"

MARIA

COME TO MY SIDE
NEVER SAY THAT YOU'RE LEAVING
THAT WAY THERE'LL BE NO GRIEVING
FOR MY LOST LITTLE BABY
SAD AND ALONE

ARMS OPEN WIDE
CATCHING EVERY FALSE STEP THAT YOU TAKE
YOU'RE MAKING SO MANY MISTAKES
BABY I LOVE YOU
BUT DON'T ASK ME NOT TO JUDGE YOU

BABY DON'T SAY GOODBYE
TRY TO SEE THE LIGHT
LISTEN TO ME
AND MAYBE YOU'LL SEE I LOVE YOU
AND THERE'S MORE OUT THERE FOR YOU

WHAT'S THAT FACE?
DON'T TURN AWAY
WHY AREN'T YOU LISTENING TO ME?
I'M MAKING SO MANY MISTAKES
BABY I LOVE YOU
BUT DON'T ASK ME NOT TO JUDGE YOU

BABY DON'T SAY GOODBYE
I COULD UNDERSTAND, LISTEN AND SEE
AND MAYBE I'LL LEARN TO LOVE WHO YOU ARE

AND MAYBE I'LL SEE
 LETTING YOU GO IS MY PROOF
 THAT BABY, I LOVE YOU

(MARIA exits. Nothing happens, although it is obvious from the state of the stage that someone should be there – the next act. DOROTHY searches the room; her gaze finally rests on ANDREW)

DOROTHY

Could you come onto the stage please?

(ANDREW looks around him. He indicates himself to check if DOROTHY is referring to him. SHE acknowledges this and he hesitantly moves into the space. HE is rather overwhelmed.)

DOROTHY

Well....?

ANDREW

I don't know what you want me to say.

(HE is really awkward. As DOROTHY questions HIM, HE becomes more comfortable and, then starts to react naturally as HE answers her questions.)

DOROTHY

Why don't you start by introducing yourself?

ANDREW

Oh. All right. Well, hello.... Everybody. My name is... Andrew.

DOROTHY

How old are you?

ANDREW

Twenty-four.

DOROTHY

I'm surprised your costume isn't more appropriate.

ANDREW

I'm sorry. I didn't know. I just woke up. I think. And I was here.

DOROTHY

Do you like it here?

ANDREW

It's... fantastic, really. I don't know what else to say.

DOROTHY

That's such a pity.

ANDREW

Who are you anyway?

DOROTHY

That doesn't matter.

ANDREW

Well, what you want me to say? What do you want me to do?

DOROTHY

Whatever you want.

ANDREW

I don't know what I want.

DOROTHY

Don't you?

ANDREW

I don't know. Sometimes when you think about something, and you try to say it out loud, when you try to ask for it, you start to realise that maybe it's not so easy, that maybe other people don't understand the world in the same way.

DOROTHY

Don't you think that it's time you cleared the tracks for yourself? Opened up to something new?

ANDREW

I don't understand.

DOROTHY

Follow the birds, Andrew. Reach for something beyond yourself. But don't forget the things that are inside.

ANDREW

I don't know how.

DOROTHY

Yes you do, Andrew. It's easy. All you have to do is sing out. In your own voice. Now – go.

SONG: "ANDREW"

ANDREW

WELL I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO
AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY
BUT I HAVE TO FIND A WAY

TO START MY LIFE AGAIN TODAY

ALL THESE SHADOWS FROM MY PAST
ALL THESE THINGS FROM LONG AGO
DON'T REFLECT THE THINGS I KNOW
SO IT'S TIME TO LET GO

SO ANDREW, ANDREW
IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON UP AND TIME
TO FIND A VOICE TO CALL MY OWN
AND A PLACE TO CALL A HOME
TO TAKE A STEP INTO THE GREAT UNKNOWN
AND START A NEW ADVENTURE

OPEN UP YOUR EYES AND SEE
EVERYTHING THAT YOU COULD BE
YOU'RE YOUR FATHER'S SON BUT DEEP WITHIN
THERE IS A MAN WORTH SOMETHING MORE

AND I KNOW THIS HOUSE THAT'S ALWAYS ON MY MIND
THESE SHADOWS I ALLOW TO HAUNT ME
IT'S TIME I LEFT THEM ALL BEHIND
IT'S TIME TO REACH FOR SOMETHING MORE

THE OTHER SIDE OF DARKNESS IS A NEVER FAILING LIGHT
WHEN IT'S BURNING IN YOUR SOUL YOU'LL SURELY FIND
THAT THE MORNING STAR CAN GUIDE YOU
THROUGH THE NEVER ENDING NIGHT
IF YOU LEAVE THE THINGS THAT HOLD YOU DOWN BEHIND

I WILL FLY FREE
GOING TO BELIEVE IN SOMETHING
I'VE NEVER BELIEVED IN –
IN ME

JUST WAIT AND SEE
I'LL BELIEVE IN SOMETHING
I'VE NEVER BELIEVED IN –
IN ME

Scene 12

DOROTHY

Sikhuluma's mother said to her son, "I'm going into that house. I want to see this thing that has killed my sons; that puts something in the road to make people die."

And Sikhuluma spoke: "No. If we must die, let us die on this road. Don't go into that house of shadows." But his mother would not listen and she went into the homestead. The fire went out and smoke filled the air. She could not see. But she heard something moving in the dark. She heard something moving near her and then she screamed as it lifted her in the air and broke her backbone in two.

Sikhuluma knew that his mother had died. He did not follow her into the homestead; instead he walked on alone. But he did not know where he was going. The sun set, and rose again many times and one morning he looked around. Before him he saw his village and he ran through the countryside. When he got there, he saw his old house – and he started to cry. And while he was crying, the people of the village came to him and tried to find out what was wrong. They started to speak to him with gestures, remembering that he had no voice.

But Sikhuluma spoke: "My mother and brothers have stayed behind. They live only inside my head and my heart. Only I have returned." And he told their story in his own voice.

Scene 13

(The future. MARIA is upstairs, in the bed. She is ill, drifting in and out of sleep. ANDREW, grey-haired and wearing a coat, walks briskly up the drive; there is the sound of keys in the lock and he opens the door.)

ANDREW

Mom!

(MARIA tries to sit up in bed. SHE pinches her cheeks.)

ANDREW

Mom!

MARIA

There, there. Calm down.

ANDREW

Why didn't you call us sooner?

MARIA

Call you?

ANDREW

About the attack.

MARIA

There's no use fussing.

ANDREW

We're going to make sure you get better. Dorothy and I will take care of everything. We'll see you get a nice long rest.

MARIA

I'm not getting better.

ANDREW

Mom....

MARIA

We can't pretend anymore; it'll only make us afraid of each other again. You must be hungry. Have you had anything to eat?

ANDREW

Don't worry about me. I'll get something later. Have you eaten anything?

MARIA

I've had all I want. I'd like to get some sleep.

ANDREW

Yes, you sleep.

MARIA

Andrew...

ANDREW

Yes, mom?

MARIA

Have you been happy, son?

ANDREW

Mother.... Yes.

MARIA

I only want to remember the happy things now. The other things, the hateful things – I can't bear to think of them.

ANDREW

Good night, mother.

MARIA

Good night.

(ANDREW goes downstairs. DOROTHY passes as she goes back up to the bedroom with some soup and bread for MARIA.)

ANDREW

I think she's asleep.

(Upstairs, DOROTHY realises that MARIA is dying.)

DOROTHY

Andrew, come quick.

(ANDREW rushes up the stairs.)

ANDREW

Mother.

(MARIA is dead. DOROTHY folds MARIA'S hands over her chest and lifts the bedding to cover her face.)

ANDREW

No, don't. Not yet.

(ANDREW goes downstairs and lights the first candle.)

SONG: "LIGHT A CANDLE" (REPRISE)

LIGHT A CANDLE; SAY A PRAYER.
WILL IT BRING YOU BACK?
NEVER.

ASK A QUESTION; MAKE A SIGN.
DOES IT MATTER NOW –
YOU'RE GONE FOREVER.

PART OF HEAVEN'S ETERNAL DESIGNS –
FREE FROM CANDLES AND QUESTIONS AND SIGNS.
LAID TO REST NOW.
LAID TO REST.

(MUSIC continues under as NEALL arrives through the open front door, which he closes.)

NEALL

I found it. I thought I'd have to go to every bookshop in town. But I found one right away, at that little place in Walmer Park. "Stories My Mothers Told Me" by Andrew Stevens.

(HE notices ANDREW properly for the first time.)

What's wrong?

(A look from ANDREW as he notices the candle.)

Oh. Andrew, I'm so sorry.

(DOROTHY comes downstairs.)

DOROTHY

They are always difficult, these new beginnings. Isn't amazing how after so many years of living you're left with so little? And so much.

ANDREW

It is.

(A moment of silence.)

ANDREW

Dorothy... I don't know how to... Maybe this isn't a good but I have something for you. My book. Our book. A new book of old stories. I just wanted you to... well, thank you. For everything

DOROTHY

A book? You remembered. You remembered all of them. They're your stories now too.

ANDREW

I love you.

(THEY embrace.)

DOROTHY

Don't be so sad. This house will always be here and so will your mother. Even when we are gone, the walls will remember us.

ANDREW

I know. But it isn't easy to say goodbye, is it?

DOROTHY

I didn't think it would be.

(For a moment, the house seems to glow with all the warmth and the coldness of memory.)

Curtain